

**THE SECOND CHAPTER  
OF THE  
*PRAMANAVARTTIKA***

**Advanced Buddhist Philosophy Course in English**

**INSTITUTE OF BUDDHIST DIALECTICS  
McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala, India  
Prepared by Venerable Kelsang Wangmo**

**5th, 6th and 7th  
TERM**



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## Technical Notes

### Formatting of Sanskrit & Tibetan Names & Terminology

Sanskrit terms and titles, that are not proper names, are initially presented in bold italics. Sanskrit diacritics are not used in this text.

Tibetan words are rendered in the English alphabet according to the Wylie system. When both a Sanskrit term and its Tibetan translation are shown in parentheses, the Tibetan always follows the Sanskrit.

Tibetan proper names that appear in the body of the text (not in parenthesis) are rendered in simple phonetics, rather than in Wylie. Those proper names include: Gyaltsab Je (Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen), Yeshe Thabgyal, Geshe Palden Drakpa, Geshe Wangchen, Geshe Gyatso, Geshe Tsering Norbu.

### Significance of the fonts and formatting used in the translation of the Second Chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* by Gyaltsab Je

TEXT SOURCE	LOCATION ON PAGES OF HANDOUT	FONT
Gyaltsab Je's commentary	at the left margin	Bookman Old Style 11pt.
Gyaltsab Je's headings of the OUTLINES of the <i>Pramanavarttika</i>	at the left margin	<b>Bookman Old Style 13pt.</b>
Indian or Tibetan sources, e.g., Dharmakirti's <i>Pramanavarttika</i>	indented	<i>Bookman Old Style 11pt. italics</i>
*Explanatory comments by contemporary masters	indented	Cambria 11pt.

\* Explanations and clarifications of difficult points by contemporary masters have been translated and summarized by Ven. Kelsang Wangmo and appended to Gyaltsab Je's text.

Since different terms are used to translate the Sanskrit word *pramana* (*tshad ma*), for the sake of consistency Ven. Kelsang Wangmo has used the Sanskrit term in translating the text of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* and Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, instead of an English equivalent. However, in translating the explanatory comments by contemporary masters, *pramana* is only employed in a few instances. More frequently, an appropriate English term is used. With few exceptions, the English term used is "valid cognizer".

# Introduction

The following handout for the IBD Buddhist philosophy course on the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* contains translations of two texts:

1. The second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam 'grel; Commentary on [Dignaga's Compendium of] Pramana*)
2. The second chapter of Gyaltsab Je's commentary on the *Pramanavarttika*, called *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi tshig le'ur byes pa rnam bshad thar lam gsal byed*) — usually referred to as *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* (*thar lam gsal byed*)

Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* is interspersed with the *Pramanavarttika*, for the commentary provides detailed expositions on the meaning of the verses of the root text.

Furthermore, since both texts are difficult to comprehend on their own, they are also interspersed with additional explanations by contemporary masters such as Ven. Geshe Yeshe Thabgyal, Ven. Geshe Palden Drakpa, Ven. Geshe Wangchen, Ven. Geshe Gyatso, Ven. Geshe Tsering Norbu, and others.

As the name of the text implies, Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* is a commentary on Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* (*Pramana-samuccaya; tshad ma kun btus*). The six chapters of Dignaga's *Compendium* are written in verse and constitute one of the most important works on *pramana*.

Here, the Sanskrit term *pramana* translates as “logic” or “epistemology”, for it refers to the main topic of Dignaga and Dharmakirti's texts. However, when explaining Buddhist philosophical concepts, *pramana* is usually translated as “valid cognizer”. In some contexts it can also be translated as “authority”, “authoritative”, “authentic”, “proof”, “proven”, and so forth.

## Dignaga

Dignaga (ca. 450-540 CE) was a proponent of the Chittamatra Following Reasoning philosophical school. He was one of Vasubandhu's four great disciples, each of whom surpassed their teacher in a particular field of Buddhist study. Dignaga was more learned than Vasubandhu in *Pramana*<sup>2</sup>.

Dignaga was born into a Brahmin family in Simhavaktra, near Kanchi in South India. At a young age, he became very proficient in the sacred Brahmin scriptures and the worldly sciences. However, he eventually lost interest in the spiritual system of the Brahmins, developed renunciation for the suffering nature of cyclic existence, and took ordination from a Buddhist teacher called Nagadatta (*glang po byin*) of the Vatsiputriya system, a sub-school of the Buddhist Vaibhashika School. Nagadatta named him Dignaga (*phyogs kyi glang po*) and gave him extensive teachings on the three baskets according to the Vatsiputriya system.

Followers of the Vatsiputriya system assert a type of self that is inexpressible as something substantially or imputedly existent, or as being the same or different from the five aggregates. Dignaga was instructed by his teacher to meditate on the inexpressible self. In an attempt to find and comprehend the inexpressible self, Dignaga is said to have kindled fires in the four directions, stripped off his clothes, and meditated day and night. When he reported back to his teacher that he was unable to find such a self, his teacher took this as an indirect criticism and sent him to study elsewhere.

Dignaga went to stay at Nalanda Monastery where he became a disciple of Vasubandhu. He studied and mastered the entire body of sutras and treatises of the Hinayana and Mahayana, and became a great tantric practitioner, receiving instructions from Manjushri himself. He also developed great skills in debate and on numerous occasions defended the monastery against learned non-Buddhist scholars who challenged the monks in debate. Dignaga became particularly renowned for having defeated the great

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<sup>2</sup>The other three disciples were (1) Sthirarmati who was more learned than Vasubandhu in *Abhidharma*, (2) Gunaprabha who was more learned in the *Vinaya*, and (3) Arya Vimuktisena who was more learned in the *Prajnaparamita*.

Brahmin scholar, Sudurjaya, who—as a result of losing the debate—converted to Buddhism together with his disciples.

At the time, it was customary for a scholar who lost a debate to adopt, along with his disciples, the spiritual system of the victor.

Dignaga eventually left Nalanda in order to lead a contemplative life in the forests of Orissa. There he resolved to compose what became his most famous work, the **Compendium of Pramana**, as a compilation of his many previous writings on *Pramana*, which, according to his own description, were fragmentary works. It is said that he wrote the first verse of the **Compendium**, comprising the homage and promise to compose the text, on a rock at his cave hermitage:

*To the one who has become pramana, the one wishing to benefit migrators,  
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector”, I bow down.*

*In order to establish pramana, I will herewith create a single compendium of my various  
fragmentary writings.*

When he wrote those words many auspicious signs occurred, such as light blazing forth, the earth trembling, loud thunder rolling in the sky, and so forth. A Brahmin ascetic called Krishnamuni observed these signs and through his clairvoyance understood that they were the results of Dignaga’s writing. Driven by envy, he went to Dignaga’s cave while the latter was away on alms-rounds and erased the words. When Dignaga returned, he wrote the verse again, and again Krishnamuni came to erase it. The third time Dignaga left an additional note that read, “Please do not erase this verse just for fun because with this verse I am pursuing a great aim. Also, there is no point in erasing it out of envy since it is in my mind from where it cannot be removed. But if you disagree with these words, you should show yourself, and we will debate.” When the auspicious signs occurred a third time, Krishnamuni went again to Dignaga’s cave. But upon reading the note he refrained from erasing the verse and waited for Dignaga’s return. The two debated and Krishnamuni was defeated three times. When Dignaga asked him to adopt the Buddha Dharma as a result of his defeat, the Brahmin ascetic grew furious and emanated magical flames that burned Dignaga’s clothes and possessions.

Distraught and discouraged by the Brahmin’s reaction, Dignaga felt that if he could not help the highly intelligent Brahmin, how could he be of benefit to all sentient beings by composing the **Compendium of Pramana**? He threw the chalk with which he had written the verse up in the air, thinking, “As soon as the chalk touches the ground, I will give up my aspiration to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and instead strive to become self-liberated”. But the chalk did not fall back to the ground and when he looked up, he saw Manjushri in the sky, holding the chalk. Manjushri asked Dignaga not to give up his mind of enlightenment, and promised to protect him until he attained the state of a Buddha. He also asked him to compose the **Compendium** and prophesied that in the future this commentary would become an eye for migrating beings.

Encouraged by these words, Dignaga composed the **Compendium of Pramana**, which has continued to be the subject of study, contemplation and meditation, along with Dharmakirti’s **Pramanavarttika**, for over a millennium; at first widely in India and then in Tibet, Mongolia and the Himalayan regions.

After completing the text, Dignaga travelled around South India and greatly furthered the spread of Buddhism. One of his main disciples was Ishvarasena (*dbang phyung sde*) who composed a commentary on the **Compendium of Pramana** and later became one of Dharmakirti’s teachers.

## Dharmakirti

Dharmakirti (ca. 600-660 CE) was also a follower of the Chittamattra School Following Reasoning. He was born to a Brahmin family in Tirumalai in the kingdom of Chudamani of Tamil Nadu. Until the age of eighteen he trained in the Brahminical tradition, and he became very well-versed in non-Buddhist philosophy. Then, upon reading a Buddhist text, he developed faith in the Buddha Dharma and started to dress in the style of a Buddhist layperson. This angered the Brahmins and he was expelled from his community.

Dharmakirti went to Nalanda monastery where he received ordination and extensive teachings from Dharmapala (*chos skyong*). Then he requested Ishvarasena, who was a direct disciple of Dignaga, to

teach him the **Compendium of Pramana**. Ishvarasena taught him the text three times. After the first time, Dharmakirti's understanding of the **Compendium** had become equal to that of Ishvarasena; after the second time, it had become equal to Dignaga's; and after the third time Dharmakirti was able to recognize that some of Ishvarasena's assertions were not in accordance with Dignaga's views. After Dharmakirti revealed those mistaken assertions to Ishvarasena, the latter was delighted by his student's intelligence and granted him permission to compose a commentary on the **Compendium of Pramana** in order to refute those assertions.

Dharmakirti was also initiated into the Buddhist tantras, became a highly accomplished practitioner, and had a direct vision of Heruka.

In order to deepen his understanding of non-Buddhist philosophy, Dharmakirti then went to work as the servant of a renowned non-Buddhist scholar and his family for several years. Pretending not to be a Buddhist, Dharmakirti learned all the secret points of the scholar's philosophical system. Later by challenging and defeating the renowned scholar in debate, Dharmakirti converted him and his disciples to Buddhism.

Thereafter, Dharmakirti travelled across India converting many people to Buddhism. Eventually he arrived at the gates of the residence of King Utpullapusa, who had heard of Dharmakirti's great fame and invited him to stay in his kingdom. Dharmakirti accepted and while staying there composed the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* (*tshad ma sde bdun*)—one of which is the **Pramanavarttika**—as well as an auto-commentary on the first chapter of the **Pramanavarttika**. However, most contemporary scholars were unable to grasp the meaning of the treatises. Those few who understood their meaning, moved by envy, claimed that they were incorrect and tied them with string to the tail of a dog. Dharmakirti responded that the dog, by running through different villages and cities, would in that manner spread the treatises. He also added a verse to the beginning of the **Pramanavarttika** (after the verse of homage and the promise to compose the text) that reads:

*Most living beings are attached to the mundane and not endowed with the  
dexterity of wisdom.  
Not only are they not interested in excellent teachings, they are hateful owing to  
the defilement of envy.  
This is why the thought that this [treatise] will be beneficial to others does not  
occur.  
But having familiarized [my] mind with excellent teachings, I am happy [to  
compose the treatise] for the sake of generating great striving.*

Sometime later Dharmakirti taught the **Pramanavarttika** to two of his main disciples, Devendrabodhi (*lha dbang blo*) and Shakyabodhi (*sha'kya blo*). Afterwards, he asked Devendrabodhi to compose a commentary on the text. However, displeased with the first draft Dharmakirti washed it away with water; displeased with the second draft he burned it. He finally accepted the third draft but criticized it, remarking that although the explicit meaning of the text was conveyed, the deeper implicit meaning was not.

Thinking that no one would be able to properly comprehend his text, Dharmakirti added the following line to the end of the **Pramanavarttika**:

*Just as a river into the ocean, [the meaning of this treatise] will dissolve into my  
body and disappear.*

Towards the end of his life, Dharmakirti founded a school and a temple at Kalinga where he passed away.

Both Dignaga and Dharmakirti strongly affected the course of both Buddhist philosophy and Indian philosophy in general. Their expositions on language, negation, direct perception, etc., were highly influential among both Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophers, but their greatest impact derived from their analysis of inferential reasoning.

Dignaga and Dharmakirti are often described as Buddhist logicians, for they formulated a system of logic and epistemology that was based on a new form of deductive reasoning. Yet this does not mean that they were chiefly interested in the formal properties of reasoning. Instead, they regarded logic as a

useful tool that enables Buddhist practitioners to eliminate their misperceptions, replace them with correct apprehensions of reality and eventually attain liberation and Buddhahood.

The debate format that is still very popular among Tibetan Buddhist students of debate is based largely on Dignaga and Dharmakirti's works. Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika*, in particular, provides Tibetan Buddhist philosophers with a standard vocabulary that is used as a framework for analysis of the various Buddhist scriptures. It also represents the epistemological foundation of the curriculum in many Tibetan monastic institutions.

## Gyaltsab Je

Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen (1364–1432) was born in Tsang province of central Tibet. He was ordained as a monk at the age of ten and given the name Darma Rinchen (*dar ma rin chen*). Gyaltsab Je studied at a Sakya Monastery, the Kadam monastery of Sangpu (*gsang phu*) and the Kagyu monastery of Tsetang (*rtse thang*), which later converted to the Gelug tradition. Like Lama Tsongkhapa, he was also a student of the renowned Sakya Master Rendawa Zhoenu Lodroe (*red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros*).

After extensive study of the *Prajnaparamita*, *Pramana*, *Vinaya*, and so forth, Gyaltsab Je became an accomplished and eloquent scholar of the Sakya tradition, famed for his intellect and knowledge. While visiting different monasteries in Central Tibet, he met Lama Tsongkhapa. He had heard of Lama Tsongkhapa's fame and went to attend one of Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings at Nyaeltoe Radrong (*gnyal stod ra grong*) Monastery. As Gyaltsab Je listened to Lama Tsongkhapa, he was astounded by the clarity and profundity of his teaching, and generated great faith. From that time on, Gyaltsab Je was completely devoted to Lama Tsongkhapa and became one of his main disciples. He received extensive teachings from Lama Tsongkhapa and took copious notes. Being a prolific writer he composed numerous commentaries (such as the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*). He also supervised the construction of Ganden Monastery.

Before Lama Tsongkhapa passed away, he appointed Gyaltsab Je as the first throne holder of the Ganden (or Gelug) tradition.

## Seven Treatises on Pramana

As mentioned above, Dharmakirti composed seven commentaries on the *Compendium of Pramana*, referred to as the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* (*tshad ma sde bdun*). These seven texts can be categorized into:

- i. Three treatises that are like a body, and
- ii. Four treatises that are like branches.

The three treatises that are like a body are:

- a) *Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam 'grel; Commentary on [Dignaga's Compendium of] Pramana*);
- b) *Pramanaviniscaya* (*tshad ma rnam nges; Ascertainment of Pramana*);
- c) *Nyayabindu* (*rigs thigs; Drops of Reasoning*).

The four treatises that are like branches are:

*Hetubindu* (*gtan tshigs thig pa; Drops of Logic*);  
*Sambandhapariksha* (*'brel ba brtag pa; Investigating Relations*);  
*Samtanantarassiddhi* (*rgyud gzhan grub pa; Proof of Other [Mental] Continuums*);  
*Vadanyaya* (*rtsod pa'i rigs pa; Reasoning of Debate*).

The three *treatises that are like a body* are general elaborations on Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* on logic and epistemology. The first is the most extensive, the second is slightly shorter, and the third is the shortest. These three are *treatises that are like a body* because they each teach the eight 'pivotal points of logic' (*rtog ge'i tshig don rgyad*).



The eight 'pivotal points of logic' are:

- Correct inferential cognizers (*rjes dpag yang dag*);
- False inferential cognizers (*rjes dpag ltar snang*);
- Correct direct perceivers (*mngon sum yang dag*);
- False direct perceivers (*mngon sum ltar snang*);
- Correct proof statements (*sgrub ngag yang dag*);
- False proof statements (*sgrub ngag ltar snang*);
- Correct refutations (*sun 'byin yang dag*);
- False refutations (*sun 'byin ltar snang*).

Each of the three texts teaches the eight 'pivotal points of logic' by *primarily* teaching the four correct pivotal points, while teaching the four false pivotal points in an *ancillary* fashion.

The last four texts are *treatises that are like branches* because they do not teach all eight 'pivotal points of logic' but only some of them, and because they are just supplements to the first, third, or fourth chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. The *Hetubindu* (on correct reasons) and *Sambandhapariksha* (on the relationship between correct reasons and predicates) are supplements to the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*, while the *Samtanantarasisiddhi* (on the issue of other minds) is a supplement to the third and the *Vadanyaya* (on debate techniques, etc.) is a supplement to the fourth chapter.

## Eight Pivotal Points of Logic

Among the four 'correct pivotal points of logic', (1) correct inferential cognizers and (3) correct direct perceivers are considered to be the tools that facilitate our own understanding. They function mainly for our own benefit for they enable us to accomplish our personal short and long-term goals by replacing harmful misperceptions with well-founded recognition of reality.

(1) *Correct inferential cognizers* and inferential cognizers are equivalent. Inferential cognizers are conceptual consciousnesses that realize their main objects in dependence on correct reasons. These types of consciousness are essential for Buddhist practice because they facilitate the realization of essential concepts, such as the suffering nature of cyclic existence, impermanence, selflessness, etc., which need to be apprehended in order to gradually eliminate the numerous misperceptions that are responsible for our problems and difficulties. However, most of these essential concepts are slightly hidden phenomena and cannot be perceived initially without relying on logical reasoning. Logical reasoning, in turn, relies on logically correct syllogisms. An example of such a syllogism is:

*Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is a product of its own causes and conditions. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame.*

A correct syllogism has four parts: a (i) subject, (ii) predicate, (iii) correct reason and (iv) example. In the case of the syllogism cited above, "physical body" is the subject, "impermanent" the predicate, "being a product of its own causes and conditions" the correct reason, and "the last moment of the candle flame" the example. Also, the composite of the two, the subject (physical body) and the predicate (impermanent), constitutes the *object that is to be established* (*bsgrub bya*), also called the *thesis*. Hence, "the physical body is impermanent" is the above syllogism's *object that is to be established* (i.e., it is that which is realized by the inferential cognizer which arises in dependence on the syllogism).

Furthermore, for a syllogism to be logically correct, its reason must have three qualities. These three qualities are called the 'three modes of the reason':

- a. The property of the subject
- b. The forward pervasion
- c. The counter pervasion

The reason of the above-cite syllogism possesses the first mode of the reason, the **property of the subject**, because the reason (*being a product of its own causes and conditions*) is the property (or characteristic) of the subject (*the physical body*). The reason is the property of the subject because the *physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*.

The reason of the syllogism possesses the second mode of the reason, the **forward pervasion**, because—to put it simply—'whatever *is a product of its own causes and conditions* is necessarily *impermanent*'. In the same way, it possesses the third mode of the reason, the **counter-pervasion**, because 'whatever is *notimpermanent* is necessarily *nota product of its own causes and conditions*'.

After having realized the different parts and qualities of the syllogism—*e.g.*, that *the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*, that *whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent*, and so forth—a practitioner eventually generates an inferential cognizer realizing the *object that is to be established* (the *thesis*), *i.e.*, realizing that the physical body is impermanent. Since such realization arises in dependence on a correct reason (being a product of its own causes and conditions), inferential cognizers are described as conceptual consciousnesses that realize their main objects (*e.g.*, that the physical body is impermanent) in dependence on correct reasons.

(3) *Correct* direct perceivers and direct perceivers are also equivalent. Direct perceivers refer to correct sense or mental consciousnesses that perceive their main object directly without relying on a generic image. Examples of direct perceivers are sense direct perceivers, such as an eye consciousness apprehending a table, an ear consciousness apprehending a song, a nose consciousness apprehending the smell of perfume, and so forth. These sense consciousnesses realize phenomena that are obvious or manifest (*i.e.*, not hidden), such as shapes, colors, sounds, etc. Other examples of direct perceivers are self-knowers (explained below), clairvoyant awarenesses and yogic direct perceivers. Yogic direct perceivers are mental direct perceivers that directly realize their main objects (*e.g.*, impermanence, selflessness, etc.) in dependence on prolonged and extensive meditation.

Direct perceivers are essential to Buddhist practice. Although hidden phenomena are realized for the first time by inferential cognizers, such a realization is not sufficient for practitioners aspiring to transform their mind and attain liberation or Buddhahood. Such a realization is not sufficient because inferential cognizers are conceptual consciousnesses that do not realize their objects directly but through a generic image.

For instance, an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness does not realize selflessness directly but through the generic image of selflessness. Hence, a practitioner who has cultivated an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness continues to familiarize with the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness until, after prolonged and intense meditation, that consciousness transforms into a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness, which is strong enough to serve as an effective antidote to the misperception of the self and to other afflictions.

Ordinary direct perceivers, such as sense direct perceivers, are also significant in Buddhist practice for they enable practitioners to listen to teachings, read the scriptures, etc. They also facilitate inferential cognition of a hidden phenomenon. For instance, a practitioner who generated the inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent in dependence on the above syllogism (*Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is the product of its own causes and conditions*) must have realized, prior to generating such an inferential cognizer, that *the physical body is the product of its own causes and conditions*. But unlike the *physical body being impermanent*, the *physical body being a product of its own causes and conditions* is not a hidden phenomenon, for it can be realized for the first time by an eye consciousness.

(5) Correct proof statements and (7) correct refutations are considered to be the tools that facilitate others' understanding, which is why they are mainly for the benefit of others. After having attained realizations ourselves by means of inferential cognizers and direct perceivers, we need to assist others in attaining the same realizations by refuting their wrong views with correct refutations, and by generating realizations in their mental continuums through proof statements.

(5) Correct proof statements are verbal statements that express a correct syllogism. An example of a proof statement is, "Whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame. Likewise, the physical body is also a product of its own causes and conditions." Here these words state that just as the last moment of a candle flame is impermanent because it is a product of its own causes and conditions, likewise the physical body is impermanent because it is a product of its own causes and conditions.

Therefore, the words of the proof statement express the following syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it is a product of its own causes and conditions. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame.*

In dependence on hearing that proof statement, a person who has not yet realized that the physical body is impermanent is able to cultivate an inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent.

(7) Correctrefutations refer to correct consequences. Like a syllogism, a consequence is a form of logical statement, which one cites to help another person first to recognize and then to let go of a wrong view. A consequence is stated in such a way as to reveal the absurdity of that person's wrong view; it turns his own assertions against him, so that he is unable to give a correct response without contradicting what he asserted.

For instance, to a person who holds that (a) the physical body is permanent, that (b) the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions, and that (c) whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent, the following consequence is cited:

*Regarding the subject, the physical body, it follows that it is not a product of its own causes and condition because it is permanent.*

In this case, the person accepts that *the physical body is permanent*, which is why he cannot claim that the **reason is not established** (i.e., he cannot claim that it is not correct that the physical body is permanent).

Since he accepts the forward and counter-pervasions (i.e., that whatever is *permanentis necessarily not* a product of its own causes and conditions, and whatever is a *product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily not permanent*), he cannot claim that there is **no pervasion**. Lastly he cannot even accept that the physical body is not a product of its own causes and conditions, for that would contradict his assertion that *the physical body is a product of its own causes and conditions*. He is thus left speechless.

The person comes to realize that his views are contradictory, which enables him to reassess his beliefs until he either thinks that the physical body is probably impermanent or is convinced that it is. At that point one cites a proof statement expressing a syllogism that establishes that the physical body is impermanent.

As mentioned above, in dependence on that syllogism the person is able to eventually generate an inferential cognizer *realizing* that the physical body is impermanent.

Regarding the four 'false pivotal points of logic', (2) false inferential cognizers refer to conceptual consciousnesses that are not actual inferential cognizers because they do not realize their objects. An example of a false inferential cognizer is a correctly assuming consciousness, perceiving that the physical body is impermanent, which did not arise in dependence on a syllogism. Another example is a correctly assuming consciousness, perceiving that the physical body is impermanent, which arose in dependence on a wrong syllogism. A wrong syllogism is a logically incorrect syllogism and therefore does not lead to an inferential cognizer realizing the syllogism's *object that is to be established* (the *thesis*). For instance, the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is impermanent, because it exists*, is a wrong syllogism since there is 'no pervasion'. There is 'no pervasion' because whatever exists is not necessarily impermanent. Whatever exists is not necessarily impermanent because there are phenomena that are permanent.

Another example of a wrong syllogism is: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is permanent because it is unchangeable*. This is a wrong syllogism because the reason is not an attribute of the subject, i.e., the physical body is not unchangeable. Such a wrong syllogism may give rise to a wrong conceptual consciousness perceiving the physical body to be permanent, which is also a false inferential cognizer.

(4) False direct perceivers refer to conceptual consciousnesses or wrong non-conceptual awarenesses. Since false direct perceivers are either conceptual or wrong consciousnesses they are not actual direct perceivers. Examples include a conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness, an eye consciousness perceiving a blue snow mountain, and a memory consciousness remembering a table.

(6) False proof statements are statements that express a wrong syllogism. This means that wrong proof statements express a logically incorrect syllogism in dependence on which one cannot generate an inferential cognizer realizing the syllogism's *object that is to be established* (the *thesis*). An example of a false proof statement is: "Whatever is unchangeable is necessarily permanent. For instance, like the absence of an elephant on the table. The physical body is also unchangeable." This statement is a false proof statement because it expresses the following wrong syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the physical body, it is permanent because it is unchangeable. For instance, like the absence of an elephant on the table.*

(8) Wrong consequences are consequences that do not reveal the absurdities of a person's wrong view, so that the person is unable to become aware of his contradictory assertions.

An example of a wrong consequence is: "Regarding the subject, the physical body, it follows that it is not a product of its own causes and conditions because it is permanent" addressed to a person who holds that the physical body is (a) permanent and (b) a product of its own causes and conditions, but does not hold that (c) whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent.

It is important to identify and understand these *false pivotal points of logic*, for practitioners may confuse them with their correct counterparts.

## Pramanavarttika

Among the *Seven Treatises of Pramana*, the most popular one is the *Pramanavarttika*, which has been more widely studied than Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* in Tibet, Mongolia and the Himalaya region.

The *Pramanavarttika* is written in verse and has four chapters:

1. The chapter on inference for one's own benefit (*Svarthanumana*; *rang don rjes dpag gi le'u*);
2. The chapter on the establishment of *pramana* (*Pramanasiddhi*; *tshad ma grub pa'i le'u*);
3. The chapter on direct perception (*Pratyaksha*; *mngon sum le'u*);
4. The chapter on inference for others' benefit (*Prarthanumana*; *gzhan don rjes dpag gi le'u*).

### Chapter on Inference for One's Own Benefit

Unlike the last three chapters of the *Pramanavarttika*, the first does not actually elaborate on any of the verses or chapters of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, but serves as an introduction to the text. It sets forth inferential cognizers (both the correct and false inferential cognizers, two of the eight *correct pivotal points of logic*) because, as Dharmakirti explains in his auto-commentary on the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*:

*Thorough discernment of that which is factual and that which is not depends on inferential cognizers.*

Therefore, study and contemplation of the first chapter aids practitioners to cultivate inferential cognizers in their mental continuum, which in turn facilitates their comprehension of the last three chapters.

However, instead of explaining the inferential cognizers themselves, the first chapter expounds on that which mainly gives rise to inferential cognizers, *i.e.*, correct syllogisms, and presents their general structure, categories, definitions, and so forth.

### Chapter on Establishment of Pramana

The second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is the most important one. It comments only on the first two lines of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, which constitute the homage to Buddha Shakyamuni. Elaborating on the two lines of homage, the second chapter presents liberation, Buddhahood, and the paths that lead to these two states. Dharmakirti presents liberation, Buddhahood, and the paths that

lead there by way of establishing that the Buddha is *pramana* or a 'valid cognizer'. However, this does not mean that the Buddha is literally a valid cognizer, because valid cognizers are consciousnesses while the Buddha is not a consciousness but a person. Instead, it means that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. The Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those striving for release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

As part of establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, the second chapter also sets forth past and future lives, the four noble truths, and so forth.

Some scholars explain that the reason why Dharmakirti composed the second chapter is that at the time, numerous critics expressed their disapproval of Dignaga's works on *pramana*. As mentioned above, in a Buddhist context, *pramana* is usually translated as "valid cognizer". Valid cognizers are awarenesses that are newly non-deceptive, *i.e.*, that newly realize their main objects. There are two types of valid cognizers: (a) direct valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are direct perceivers) and (b) inferential valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are inferential cognizers).

One of the main objectives of the *pramana* literature is to teach practitioners the means of cultivating correct apprehension of the essential concepts of the Buddha Dharma. Such apprehension depends primarily on realizing phenomena which are currently hidden to us that we can realize initially only with inferential cognizers. Inferential cognizers in turn depend on correct syllogisms and thus on logical reasoning. Since the *pramana* literature elucidates such logical reasoning and the way to utilize it as a tool to comprehend impermanence, selflessness, and so forth, commentaries on *pramana* are usually referred to as commentaries on "logic" or "epistemology", and the study of *pramana* is referred to as the study of "logic" or "epistemology".

Many Indian scholars were unable to recognize the value of Dignaga's work. Some claimed that teachings on *pramana* (*i.e.*, logic or epistemology) were not based on the teachings of the Buddha. Others alleged that the main purpose of the *pramana* literature was to defeat an opponent in debate and that it was of no use to those aspiring to attain liberation or Buddhahood.

Therefore, Dharmakirti taught the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* to counteract these assertions by demonstrating the significance of the *pramana* literature with respect to studying, contemplating and meditating on past and future lives, the four noble truths, liberation, Buddhahood, and so forth.

Please note that even though in general, the *Pramanavarttika* is based on the point of view of the Chittamatra School Following Reasoning, the second chapter is written from the perspective of the Sautrantika School (although it contains passages that are from the point of view of the Chittamatra School).

Also, of the two types of selflessness, selflessness of person and selflessness of phenomena other than person, the second chapter sets forth selflessness of person. The only exceptions are some of the passages that are from the point of view of the Chittamatra School which also present selflessness of phenomena.

### ***Chapter on Direct Perception & Chapter on Inference for Others' Benefit***

The last two chapters of the *Pramanavarttika* comment on the actual body of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*, *i.e.*, the six chapters of Dignaga's text. Among the eight 'pivotal points of logic', the third chapter presents correct and false direct perceivers, and the fourth chapter presents correct and false proof statements as well as correct and false refutations.

## **Elucidation of the Path to Liberation**

Dharmakirti's verses are very terse and their meaning often difficult to access. Therefore, students of the *Pramanavarttika* mostly rely on one or more of its commentaries.

One of these commentaries is Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* (which is written in prose). It is one of the foremost Tibetan commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika* still studied, debated, and meditated on in most Gelugpa monastic institutions; it is thus part of a living and vibrant

philosophical tradition. Contemporary masters regularly refer to it (and Dharmakirti's root text) when explaining past and future lives, the four noble truths, liberation, Buddhahood, and so forth.

Gyaltsab Je composed the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* based on the Indian commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika*. However, unlike most Indian commentators, Gyaltsab Je provides extremely detailed outlines, as is customary in many Tibetan treatises. The *Elucidation* structures Dharmakirti's root text by dividing it into numerous textual sections, with each section having a different heading. The advantage of such a systematic format is that the text becomes more accessible and easier to comprehend.

Furthermore, not only does Gyaltsab Je offer comprehensive explanations of the meaning of Dharmakirti's verses, he also provides lengthy discussions, thought-provoking analysis, and invaluable summaries.

In the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, he begins the presentation of the second chapter by bowing down to the revered Gurus. Thereafter, he cites the "second heading", which is the main heading of the second chapter. This heading is referred to as the "second heading", for it is the second of three headings cited at the beginning of the *Elucidation*. These three are really the subheadings of an earlier heading, which together with yet another heading constitute the basic headings of the four chapters of the *Pramanavarttika*. The two basic headings are:

- (1) The means for oneself to ascertain liberation and the paths that lead there
- (2) Having ascertained these, the means of assisting others [to ascertain liberation and the paths that lead there]

Of these two, the second is the main heading of the fourth chapter, while the first (as mentioned above) is the one that has three sub-headings:

- (1.1) The means of ascertaining hidden phenomena
- (1.2) An explanation of the objects of ascertainment—liberation, omniscience and the paths that lead there
- (1.3) The means of ascertaining obvious/manifest phenomena

Among the three subheadings, the first is the main heading of the first chapter, the second is the main heading of the second chapter, and the third is the main heading of the third chapter.

After citing the main heading of the second chapter, Gyaltsab Je gives a short introduction to the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*, in which he briefly explains the meaning of the two lines of homage of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* and the reason for establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. Thereafter he starts his elucidation of the verses in Dharmakirti's second chapter.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDYING THE INTRODUCTION

1. Who composed the *Compendium of Pramana* and how many chapters does it have?
2. Who composed the *Pramanavarttika* and how many chapters does it have?
3. Who composed the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation*?
4. Which of these three commentaries are written in verse and which are written in prose?
5. On which text does the *Pramanavarttika* primarily comment?
6. On which text does the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation* primarily comment?
7. Which philosophical tenet school does Dignaga follow?
8. Which philosophical tenet school does Dharmakirti follow?
9. Which philosophical tenet school does Gyaltsab Je follow?

## The Second Chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*

10. Among the *Seven Treatises of the Pramana*, which are the three treatises that are like a body, and which four treatises are like branches?
11. Which of the three *treatises that are like a body* is the longest and which one is the shortest?
12. How are Dignaga and Dharmakirti significant from the point of view of logic or epistemology?
13. Why are the first three treatises *like a body*, and the last four *like branches*?
14. What are the eight 'pivotal points of logic'? Think of an example for each of the eight.
15. Which of the eight 'pivotal points of logic' are mainly for one's own benefit, and which are mainly for the benefit of others?
16. Why are the four correct 'pivotal points of logic' important for Buddhist practice?
17. Why are the four false 'pivotal points of logic' explained?
18. What does an inferential cognizer depend upon in order to realize its main object?
19. What is main subject matter of the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
20. What is main subject matter of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
21. What is main subject matter of the third chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
22. What is main subject matter of the fourth chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
23. Why did Dharmakirti compose the second chapter?
24. Why is the topic of logic or epistemology called "*Pramana*", i.e., "valid cognizer"?
25. How is the *Elucidation of the Path of Liberation* different from most Indian commentaries?

## **Second Chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika***

I bow down to the revered gurus

The second [heading] is:

### **EXPLANATION OF [THIS CHAPTER'S] OBJECTS OF REALIZATION – LIBERATION, OMNISCIENCE, AND THE PATHS THAT LEAD THERE**

As mentioned above, the main heading of the second chapter is: **Explanation of the Objects of Realization – Liberation, Omniscience, and the Paths that Lead There**. Therefore, the main topics of the second chapter are liberation, omniscience, and the different paths leading to either of these states.

[The main heading of the second chapter is divided in two:]

- (1) General meaning
- (2) Meaning of the branches

In the *General Meaning*, Gyaltsab Je provides an introductory explanation. In the *Meaning of the Branches*, he starts the actual explanation of the verses of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*.

### **THE GENERAL MEANING**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga
- (2) The way the meaning [of Dignaga's explanation] is elucidated by the author of the *Pramanavarttika*
- (3) [Dignaga and Dharmakirti's] view

Under the first heading—**Citing the explanation by Acharya Dignaga**—Gyaltsab Je cites the first two lines of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* (the homage) and two lines that are the promise to compose the text. The two lines of homage from the *Compendium of Pramana* are referred to here as the *explanation by Dignaga*.

After citing the homage and the promise to compose the text, Gyaltsab Je briefly explains the meaning of those four lines.

The reason for citing the homage at the beginning of the second chapter is that, as mentioned before, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* chiefly comments on the two lines of Dignaga's homage.

### **CITING THE EXPLANATION BY ACHARYA DIGNAGA**

[The homage and the promise to compose the text read:]

*To the one who has become pramana, the one wishing to benefit migrators,  
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector” I bow down.*

*Out of love for migrators deceived by faulty logicians,*



*I will properly explain [the chapter on] the establishment of pramana.*

As mentioned above, the first two lines are from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*. With those words Dignaga pays homage to Buddha Shakyamuni. However, the latter two lines are not from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*. Instead, they are the promise to compose the text taken from Prajnakaragupta's *Ornament of the Pramanavarttika (Pramanavarttikalamkara; tshad ma rnam 'grel gyi rgyan)*, which is a commentary on the *Compendium of Pramana*. Prajnakaragupta was an important master of the *Pramana* teachings.

The promise to compose the text from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* reads:

*In order to establish pramana, I will herewith compose one [text] as a compendium  
Of all my [other] texts that provided various scattered explanations.*

Some scholars explain that Gyaltsab Je intentionally cited Prajnakaragupta's promise to compose the text instead of Dignaga's in order to indicate that the explanations Prajnakaragupta provides in his commentary accord with those given by Dignaga in the *Compendium of Pramana*.

In brief, the meaning of this [verse] is as follows: The first half presents the homage and the second half the promise to compose [the text]. The homage praises the teacher [Buddha Shakyamuni] for both his excellent causes and his excellent results. The excellent causes are twofold: (a) excellent intention and (b) excellent application. [Excellent] intention refers to great compassion that wishes to completely benefit beings. [Excellent] application refers to "the teacher": [an awareness] familiarizing itself, for the sake of others, with the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Gyaltsab Je explains that Dignaga pays homage to Buddha Shakyamuni by way of praising the Buddha's excellent causes and results. The excellent causes he cites are (a) intention and (b) application. In general, excellent intention refers to the proper motivation for becoming a Buddha; the motivation that focuses on the benefit of sentient beings, while excellent application refers to engaging in the actual practices impelled by that motivation.

Here, excellent intention is more specifically explained to refer mainly to great compassion. Great compassion is a mental factor that is defined as a loving attitude wishing for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. Yet, as explained below, excellent intention also refers to Bodhicitta, great love, and so forth.

Excellent application, which is called "teacher", here refers mainly to the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a practitioner who aspires to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. The Buddha, who teaches selflessness perfectly, is the actual teacher. But since the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a Mahayana practitioner is a cause for becoming a Buddha, the name of the result (teacher) is given to the cause (the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of a Bodhisattva).

The reason for giving the name of the result to the cause is that the Buddha attained full enlightenment in dependence on previously having meditated on selflessness (while a Bodhisattva). Also, the main teaching given by the Buddha in order to lead all sentient beings to liberation and Buddhahood is the teaching on selflessness.

Therefore, Lama Tsongkhapa says in his *Praise to Dependent Arising*:

*Since this teaching is not seen in [the works of] others  
The title of teacher is yours alone.*

The Buddha is like a skilled physician who identifies the real underlying cause of a disease and is able to prescribe a treatment that eradicates that cause.

However, excellent application—“the teacher”—also refers to the wisdom realizing impermanence, the wisdom realizing the four noble truths, the practice of the six perfections, and so on.

The words of Dignaga's homage that indicate excellent intention and excellent application are:

... to the one wishing to benefit migrators;  
To “the teacher” ...

[Excellent] results are also [twofold]: (a) the excellent own benefit [kaya] and (b) the excellent others' benefit [kaya]. The excellent own benefit [kaya] refers to [the Buddha] being endowed with the three special qualities of “the sugata”, the nature of which is elimination and realization. [The excellent] others' benefit [kaya] refers to [the Rupakaya] which has the quality of protecting migrators by way of teaching others the path [the Buddha] himself has realized.

Having engaged in prolonged and extensive meditation on the excellent intention and the excellent application, practitioners eventually attain the two excellent results of a Buddha: (a) the excellent own benefit kaya; and (b) the excellent others' benefit kaya.

The *excellent own benefit kaya* refers to “the sugata” (*bde bar gshegs pa*; the one gone to bliss / the one arrived at bliss). However, here, “the sugata” does not refer to Buddha Shakyamuni, himself, but to his cessations and realizations. Therefore, “the sugata” is categorized into: (1) *sugata-eliminations*, and (2) *sugata-realizations*. These two constitute the Buddha's excellent own benefit kaya for they are the Buddha's qualities that mainly benefit the Buddha himself.

The Buddha's eliminations and realizations are both called *sugata* (i.e., “the one gone to bliss”/“the one arrived at bliss”) because, owing to the Buddha's irrevocable cessation of all obstructions and the fact that his enlightened mind is able to directly and simultaneously realize *all* phenomena, the Buddha is free from any kind of non-blissful state, i.e., he is free from any type of imperfection.

As mentioned above in the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, each of the two categories of “the sugata” has three special qualities. The three qualities of *sugata-eliminations* are:

1. Properly eliminated
2. Eliminated without return
3. Completely eliminated

The first quality distinguishes the Buddha's elimination of obstructions from the elimination of coarse afflictions in the continuum of non-Buddhist practitioners. The Buddha has eliminated obstructions properly because his cessations are irrevocable, while the cessations of non-Buddhists are merely temporary.

The second quality distinguishes the Buddha's eliminations from the eliminations of Aryas on the path of learning, such as Arya Hearers and Solitary Realizers, who have only eliminated objects of elimination of the path of seeing. The Buddha has eliminated obstructions without return because, unlike those practitioners, he no longer returns, i.e., takes birth in Samsara under the control of afflictions and contaminated karma.

The third quality distinguishes the Buddha's eliminations from the eliminations in the continuum of Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers. The Buddha has completely eliminated obstructions to liberation and omniscience, while Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers have only eliminated obstructions to liberation.

Non-Buddhists possess none of the three qualities. Hearer and Solitary Realizer Aryas on the path of seeing who have only eliminated objects of elimination of the path of seeing possess the first quality, but not the latter two. Hearer and Solitary Realizer Foe Destroyers possess the first two qualities, but not the last one.

The three qualities of *sugata-realizations* are:

1. Realizing suchness
2. Being stable realizations
3. Realizing completely

The Buddha realizes suchness because he directly realizes the mode of subsistence of the four noble truths. His realizations are stable because his teachings do not contradict valid cognition in the least. Also, the Buddha realizes phenomena completely because he directly realizes the methods that lead to liberation and omniscience together with the results of those methods.

As before, the first quality distinguishes the Buddha's realizations from the realizations of non-Buddhists, the second quality distinguishes them from the realizations of Aryas on the path of learning, and the third from Hearer and Solitary Realizer and Destroyers.

The *excellent others' benefit kaya* refers to the Buddha's Rupakaya. The Rupakaya is classified into the Nirmanakaya and Samboghakaya. These two kayas mainly benefit sentient beings by teaching them what to adopt and what to discard, *i.e.*, by teaching them the methods for attaining liberation and omniscience.

The excellent others' benefit kaya (and thus the Rupakaya) is referred to as "protector" for it protects sentient beings from the obstructions to liberation and omniscience.

The words of Dignaga's homage that indicate the excellent own benefit kaya and the excellent others' benefit kaya are:

...*"the sugata", "the protector"...."*

Therefore, the Buddha, the Bhagavan, who from excellent causes has been generated as *pramana* endowed with the entity of the excellent results of the twofold benefits, is known as "genuine *pramana*".

With the words, "whofrom excellent causes has been generated as *pramana*", Gyaltsab Je comments on the words, "*To the one who has become pramana*", from Dignaga's homage. These words indicate that the Buddha was at some point an ordinary sentient being, who in dependence on excellent causes gradually attained full enlightenment. This distinguishes the Buddha from a creator God since a creator God is asserted to have always been divine without, at some point, having newly attained such a godly state through listening, contemplating and meditating.

Also, the Buddha is omniscient but not omnipotent; he is unable to bestow happiness or inflict suffering on sentient beings. Instead, he teaches them the methods to attain liberation and omniscience in accordance with their predispositions, aspirations, interests, and so forth.

The Buddha having become a valid cognizer and being known as genuine valid cognizer does not literally mean that the Buddha *is* a valid cognizer, for a valid cognizer is necessarily a consciousness, whereas the Buddha is a person and thus not a consciousness.

However, the Buddha is called a "valid cognizer" because he is a *valid cognizer being* (*tshad ma'i skye bu*). He is a *valid cognizer being* because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those seeking release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

A valid cognizer is defined as: a knower that is newly non-deceptive. This means that a valid cognizer is an awareness that newly realizes its main object. In other words, it realizes its main object *without* depending on a previous moment of consciousness that realized the same object. Examples of valid cognizers are the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table and the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness. Valid cognizers are explained in detail below.

There is a purpose for [calling the second chapter] the “establishment of *pramana*.” [The purpose is] to attend to migrators who are mistaken with regard to the mode of existence, because they apply an incorrect definition of a valid cognizer, etc., [provided by] faulty logicians.

This paragraph explains the meaning of the two lines that constitute the promise to compose the text:

*Out of love for migrators deceived by faulty logicians,  
I will properly explain [the chapter on] the establishment of valid  
cognition*

The purpose for calling the second chapter, “the chapter on the establishment of *pramana*” or “valid cognition,” is to attend to (or address) those who are mistaken with regard to the mode of existence of phenomena because they do not understand the definition of a valid cognizer. They do not understand the definition because they rely on faulty logicians who are unable to define a valid cognizer correctly.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je explains the meaning of the two lines of homage from Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* and the meaning of the two lines that constitute the promise to compose the text from Prajnakaragupta's *Ornament of Pramana*.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What are the main topics of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*?
2. Which words of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana* does Dharmakirti's second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* mainly comment on?
3. Who does Dignaga pay homage to in his *Compendium of Pramana*?
4. What are the two excellent causes?
5. Why are these two *excellent* causes?
6. Why is the wisdom realizing selflessness called *teacher*?
7. What are the two excellent results?
8. What are the two categories of “the sugata”?
9. Why is the first excellent result an *own benefit kaya*?
10. Why is the second excellent result an *others' benefit kaya*?
11. Why are the Buddha's cessation and realizations referred to as *sugata* / the one gone to bliss/the one arrived at bliss?
12. What are the three qualities of *sugata-eliminations*?
13. What are the three qualities of *sugata-realizations*?
14. How many of the three qualities of *sugata-eliminations* does a Hinayana Foe Destroyer possess?
15. How many of the three qualities of *sugata-realizations* does a non-Buddhist possess?
16. Why is the second excellent result referred to as “protector”?
17. Is the Buddha a valid cognizer?
18. Why is Buddha Shakyamuni described as, “the one who accomplished valid cognizers”?
19. What is the definition of a valid cognizer?
20. What is the meaning of a *valid cognizer being*?
21. Is a *valid cognizer being* necessarily a Buddha?

## THE WAY THE MEANING [OF DIGNAGA'S EXPLANATION] IS ELUCIDATED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE *PRAMANAVARTTIKA*

Under this heading, Gyaltsab Je describes how Dharmakirti elucidates in his *Pramanavarttika* the meaning of Dignaga's two lines of homage.

[The meaning of] the first half of the [first] verse [of the **CompendiumofPramana**] is taught by way of drawing out five factors: (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer, (b) the one wishing to benefit migrators, (c) “the teacher”, (d) “the sugata” and (e) “the protector”. Furthermore, the first [“the one who has become a valid cognizer”] is the basis of the [four] special qualities that are to be established; the remaining [four] are the special qualities which establish [*the one who has become a valid cognizer*].

As cited above, the first half of the first verse in Dignaga's **CompendiumofPramana** is:

*To the one who has become a valid cognizer, the one wishing to  
benefit migrators,  
To “the teacher”, “the sugata”, “the protector”, I bow down.*

The five factors are:

- a. The one who has become a valid cognizer: a *valid cognizer being*;
- b. The one wishing to benefit migrators: great compassion, etc.;
- c. “The teacher”: the wisdom realizing selflessness, etc.;
- d. “The sugata”: (i) *sugata-eliminations* and (ii) *sugata-realizations*;
- e. “The protector”: the Rupakaya that protects sentient beings by teaching them what is to be adopted and what is to be discarded with regard to the four noble truths

As mentioned above, the main topics of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* are liberation, omniscience and the paths that lead to these states. Dharmakirti presents these topics by way of expounding on the five factors.

Of those five, the last four (the one wishing to benefit migrators, “the teacher”, “the sugata” and “the protector”) establish or prove the first factor; namely, that the Buddha has become a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, that he is a *valid cognizer being*. Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says that the one who has become a valid cognizer is the basis of the four special qualities, *i.e.*, the basis of the last four factors. That basis is the object that is to be established or proved (the *thesis*). The four latter factors are the special qualities which establish or prove that the Buddha is the one who is a *valid cognizer being*.

There are two ways of explaining [the last four factors as proofs of the first factor]: one is by means of the *forward system*, which refers to the explanation that is in accordance with the sequence [of those five] presented in [Dignaga's] verse, while the other is by means of the *reverse system* which is the opposite.

The four latter factors are the proofs (*sgrub byed*), which establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, because they are the correct reasons that prove or establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. Furthermore, there are two ways in which these four serve as proofs or correct reasons: one is by means of the *forward system*, and the other is by means of the *reverse system*.

The *forward system* here refers to the sequence of the five factors as presented in Dignaga's two lines of homage. The sequence of the five according to the *forward system* is: (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer, (b) the one wishing to benefit migrators, (c) “the teacher”, (d) “the sugata” and (e) “the protector”.

As to the way in which the four factors establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*: first, (the second factor) great compassion is established. Thereafter, great

compassion serves as the proof or correct reason that establishes (the third factor) “the teacher”; “the teacher” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fourth factor) “the sugata”; “the sugata” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fifth factor) “the teacher”; and “the teacher” serves as the correct reason that establishes the main object to be established (the *thesis*), (the first factor) the *valid cognizer being*. Hence, there are five syllogisms of the *forwardsystem*.

Please note that there are different ways of formulating these syllogisms. The syllogisms cited here are translations of the five syllogisms according to the *forward system* as presented in Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* or in Geshe Wangchen’s<sup>3</sup> *The Pervasive Rain of Utpala Flowers of the Eloquent Speech* (Tib: *legs bshad utpala’i gru char*)

1. The first syllogism (from Geshe Wangchen’s *Pervasive Rain*) establishes the second factor, great compassion, in dependence on a correct reason that is none of the five factors:

**Regarding the subject, effortful (i.e., contrived) affectionate compassion that wishes to liberate all migrators from suffering, if one has familiarized oneself well with that compassion, it can become an effortless (i.e., uncontrived) awareness, because it is a mental quality that has a stable basis and does not depend on repeated concerted efforts once it has become familiar.**

The subject of the syllogism is contrived great compassion (“effortful affectionate compassion that wishes to liberate all migrators from suffering”). The predicate of the syllogism is great compassion (“if one has familiarized oneself well with that compassion it can become an uncontrived awareness”). The correct reason is that great compassion is a mental quality that has a stable basis and does not depend on repeated concerted efforts once it has become familiar.

Please note that *contrived* great compassion refers to a type of compassion that does not qualify as actual great compassion because it is not constant and does not arise spontaneously. Actual great compassion is *uncontrived*, for it refers to the constant and spontaneous affection that wants all sentient beings to be free from suffering. However, developing contrived great compassion serves as a stepping-stone to the development of uncontrived great compassion since it precedes the development of the latter.

2. The second syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation*) establishes the third factor, “the teacher”, in dependence on the reason, great compassion (the second factor):

**Regarding the subject, affectionate Bodhisattvas on the path of preparation, they initially meditate by means of two types of exertion (intense and continuous exertion) in order to directly perceive the methods to pacify suffering, because they are mundane beings who wish to conquer the suffering of all sentient beings.**

The subject of the syllogism is: ‘affectionate Bodhisattvas on the path of preparation’. The predicate of the syllogism is: “the teacher” (“they initially meditate by means of two types of exertion in order to directly perceive the methods to pacify suffering”). The correct reason is great compassion (“they are mundane beings who wish to conquer the suffering of all sentient beings”).

3. The third syllogism (from Geshe Wangchen’s *Pervasive Rain*) establishes the fourth factor, “the sugata”, in dependence on the reason, “the teacher” (the third factor):

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<sup>3</sup>Geshe Wangchen was a great contemporary master from Drepung Loseling Monastery who passed away in August 2015.

**Regarding the subject, the Muni, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he has *sugata-eliminations* in his continuum, because he is a being who, for the benefit of all sentient beings, has perfected familiarization with the application, the wisdom realizing selflessness.**

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni. The predicate of the syllogism is “the sugata” (“he has *sugata-eliminations* in his continuum”). The correct reason is “the teacher” (“he is a being who, for the benefit of all sentient beings, has perfected familiarization with the application, the wisdom realizing selflessness”).

4. The fourth syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation*) establishes the fifth factor, “the protector” in dependence on the reason, “the sugata” (the fourth factor):

**Regarding the subject, the Muni, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is the protector of those seeking release, because he has perfected the realization of the paths to liberation, and because he unerringly teaches others the paths he has realized without any thought of reward, fame and so forth.**

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni. The predicate of the syllogism is “the protector” (“he is the protector of those seeking release”). The correct reason is “the sugata” (“he has perfected the realization of the paths to liberation, and because he unerringly teaches others the paths he has realized without any thought of reward, fame and so forth”).

5. The fifth syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation*) establishes the first factor (the main object to be established, the *thesis*), a *valid cognizer being*, in dependence on the reason, “the protector” (the fifth factor):

**Regarding the subject, the Muni, the Buddha Bhagavan, he is a *valid cognizer being* for those seeking release, because he serves as refuge to those seeking release by way of teaching them the paths to liberation, and because he has perfected the ability to protect them.**

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni. The predicate of the syllogism is the *valid cognizer being* (“he is a *valid cognizer being* for those seeking release”). The correct reason is “the protector” (“he serves as refuge to those seeking release by way of teaching them the paths to liberation, and because he has perfected the ability to protect them”).

As mentioned above, of the two ways in which the four factors prove that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, the second way is from the point of view of the *reverse system*. The *reverse system* here refers to a sequence of the five factors that is the opposite of the sequence presented in Dignaga’s two lines of homage. This reverse sequence is: (a) “the protector” (b) “the sugata”, (c) “the teacher”, (d) the one wishing to benefit migrators, and (e) the one who has become a valid cognizer.

As to the way in which the four factors of the *reverse system* establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*: first (the first factor) “the protector” is established. Then “the protector” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the second factor) “the sugata”; “the sugata” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the third factor) “the teacher”; “the teacher” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fourth factor) great compassion, and great compassion serves as the correct reason that establishes the main object to be established, the *thesis*, (the fifth factor) the *valid cognizer being*.

As before, there are different ways of formulating these syllogisms. The syllogisms cited here are translations of the five syllogisms according to the *reverse system* as presented in Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* or in Khedrup Je’s *Ocean of Reasoning, a Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika*:

The five syllogisms of the *reversesystem* are:

1. The first syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation*) establishes the first factor, "the protector", in dependence on a correct reason that is none of the five factors:

**Regarding the subject, the Muni, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is a protector of those seeking release, because he has attained perfection with regard to unerringly teaching the mode of existence of the four noble truths to those striving for release.**

The subject of the syllogism is Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is "the protector" ("he is a protector of those seeking release"), and the correct reason is that Buddha Shakyamuni has attained perfection with regard to unerringly teaching the mode of existence of the four noble truths to those striving for release.

2. The second syllogism (from Khedrup Je's *Ocean of Reasoning*) establishes the second factor, "the sugata", in dependence on the reason, "the protector" (the first factor):

**Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is endowed with "the sugata" that possesses the three qualities of realizations, because he is the protector who, without depending on another master, teaches all the points and methods of adoption and relinquishment with regard to the four noble truths.**

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is "the sugata" ("he is endowed with "the sugata" that possesses the three qualities of realizations"), and the correct reason is "the protector" ("he is the protector who, without depending on another master, teaches all the points and methods of adoption and relinquishment with regard to the four noble truths").

3. The third syllogism (from Khedrup Je's *Ocean of Reasoning*) establishes the third factor, "the teacher", in dependence on the reason, "the sugata" (the second factor):

**Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is preceded by the excellent application which, for the welfare of others, familiarized for a long time with the wisdom realizing selflessness, because he obtained the sugata that possesses the three qualities of realizations.**

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is "the teacher" ("he is preceded by the excellent application which for the welfare of others, familiarized for a long time with the wisdom realizing selflessness"), and the correct reason is "the sugata" ("he obtained the sugata that possesses the three qualities of realizations").

4. The fourth syllogism (from Khedrup Je's *Ocean of Reasoning*) establishes the fourth factor, great compassion, in dependence on the reason, "the teacher" (the third factor):

**Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he is preceded by great compassion that wishes to benefit all migrators, because for the welfare of others he perfected prolonged familiarization with the wisdom realizing selflessness.**

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is great compassion ("he is preceded by great compassion that wishes to benefit all migrators"), and the correct reason is "the teacher" ("for the welfare of others he perfected prolonged familiarization with the wisdom realizing selflessness").



5. The fifth syllogism (from Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation*) establishes the fifth factor (the main object to be established, the *thesis*), a *valid cognizer being*, in dependence on the reason, great compassion (the fourth factor):

**Regarding the subject, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, he thoroughly accomplished the state of being a *valid cognizer being* which is non-deceptive with regard to those seeking release, because he is the teacher who perfected his own and others' benefit.**

The subject of the syllogism is Buddha Shakyamuni, the predicate of the syllogism is the *valid cognizer being* ("he thoroughly accomplished the state of being a *valid cognizer being* which is non-deceptive with regard to those seeking release"), and the correct reason is great compassion ("he is the teacher who perfected his own and others' benefit").

Please note that the syllogism that establishes "the sugata" by means of the *forwardsystem* explicitly establishes that the Buddha is endowed with the three qualities of *sugata-eliminations*, while the syllogism that establishes "the sugata" by means of the *reversesystem* explicitly establishes that the Buddha is endowed with the three qualities of *sugata-realizations*.

The reason for the two [ways of proving that the Buddha is a valid cognizer] is that [some say]:

*Since there exists no proof*

*That there are valid cognizers that know hidden phenomena ...*

They argue that becoming familiar with any of the methods for becoming an All-Knowing One, who has become a valid cognizer, is not a cause that gives rise to an omniscient consciousness that is such [a valid cognizer].

Also, [they argue that] there is no reason for [the existence of] an omniscient consciousness as declared, for instance, in the statement: "Such omniscient consciousness exists, because we see its results or nature."

The two lines —

*Since there exists no proof,*

*That there are valid cognizers that know hidden phenomena ...*

—are from Dharmakirti's second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. The meaning of these words will be explained in more detail below.

Even though the two lines are from the *Pramanavarttika*, they do not express Dharmakirti's position; rather, they articulate two types of wrong view held by some non-Buddhists (mainly by followers of the *Lokayata* and *Mimamsaka* systems). The first refers to the view that (1) there is no omniscient consciousness, because there are no causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness; while the second wrong view is that (2) there is no omniscient consciousness, because there is no correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Like Buddhist philosophers, the non-Buddhists who hold the second wrong view accept that a correct reason that establishes a phenomenon (the predicate) must be either of one nature with the phenomenon or the result of that phenomenon. Therefore, according to those non-Buddhists, if there were (hypothetically) a correct reason that established an omniscient consciousness, it would have to be either of one nature with the omniscient consciousness or the result of the omniscient consciousness. However, they hold that such a correct reason does not exist.

The two wrong views are the reason why Dharmakirti presents two ways to prove that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*: the *forward system* and the *reverse system*.

The *forwardsystem* is set forth in order to refute the first wrong view while the *reverse system* is set forth in order to refute the second [wrong view].

Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forward system* refutes the first wrong view that there are no causes which give rise to an omniscient consciousness. Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *reverse system* refutes the wrong view that there is no proof or correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Since the excellent intention – great compassion – is the first proof, it is indicated explicitly. [Great compassion is also] representative of Bodhicitta. Furthermore, excellent application – [the awareness that develops] familiarity with the wisdom realizing selflessness for the sake of others – is the main activity. Since that [activity] is representative of the training in generosity, morality, and so forth [they are] indicated [here], too.

Great compassion is the first proof of the Buddha being a *valid cognizer being*, i.e., great compassion is cited as the first correct reason, in dependence on which one establishes that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, because it is the most important awareness practitioners of the Mahayana have to generate initially. Therefore, the words, "the one wishing to benefit migrators" explicitly indicate great compassion. However, these words also indicate Bodhicitta, great love, the special attitude, and so forth since great compassion is representative of Bodhicitta, etc.

Furthermore, the words, "the teacher", explicitly indicate the wisdom realizing selflessness, for it is one of the main awarenesses with which Bodhisattvas familiarize themselves for the benefit of sentient beings. Yet the words also imply the wisdom realizing impermanence, the practice of the perfections of generosity, morality, patience, and so forth, since the wisdom realizing selflessness is representative of these other awarenesses.

The [section on the] first way of explaining [the five factors according to the *forwardsystem*] elucidates the manner in which the teacher arrived [at this goal and] through what paths.

The section of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* that sets forth the five factors according to the *forwardsystem* describes the different practices in which Bodhisattvas engage to reach the state of a Buddha—the motivation they generate, the various method and wisdom practices, and so forth. Therefore, in dependence on the syllogisms of the *forwardsystem*, one comes to understand the causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness.

The way one comes to such an understanding is as follows: in dependence on the first syllogism cited above one initially realizes great compassion, the loving attitude that wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. Based on such a realization, one is able to infer that those who possess great compassion engage tirelessly in the different Mahayana practices for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Also, having reflected on the suffering of sentient beings, one understands that suffering is the result of afflictions and contaminated karma, which in turn are rooted in the ignorance grasping at the self. One realizes that in order to eliminate others' suffering, Bodhisattvas first need to eradicate suffering and its root in their own continuum, which can only be accomplished by cultivating the wisdom realizing selflessness. Hence, it is in dependence on great compassion that one realizes "the teacher", the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Then one comes to understand that the wisdom that initially realizes selflessness conceptually is eventually able to realize selflessness directly. With this direct

realization, Bodhisattvas are gradually able to irrevocably eliminate the different layers of the obstructions to liberation and omniscience. Thus, in dependence on the wisdom that realizes selflessness, one is able to realize *sugata-eliminations*.

Thereafter, one comes to understand that the one who has attained the cessation of all shortcomings for the benefit of sentient beings is able to protect sentient beings by teaching them the methods for attaining the same state. This means that in dependence on *sugata-eliminations* one realizes “the protector”.

Eventually, in dependence on “the protector” one realizes that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* free from any type of fault with regard to perfectly teaching what is to be adopted and what is to be discarded. Therefore, by proceeding through these steps of realization one comes to understand that the Buddha is not a permanent naturally-arisen being, like a creator God, but that he became a *valid cognizer being* by—prior to attaining enlightenment—progressively cultivating and familiarizing himself with the causes for enlightenment, such as great compassion, the wisdom realizing selflessness, and so on. In this way, one refutes the above-mentioned assertion that the omniscient mind of the Buddha does not have any causes.

The [section on the] second way [of presenting the five factors according to the *reversesystem*] first delineates the four [noble] truths. Then, having established through [correct] signs that the Buddha has excellent realizations, and from that, that [certain] causes must precede [Buddhahood], [this section] indicates the correct reason [that establishes] how [the Buddha] has arrived [at his goal] in dependence on these paths.

The section of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* that explains the five factors according to the *reversesystem* first expounds on the four noble truths. Then, by means of citing two correct signs or syllogisms, it establishes that the Buddha possesses excellent realizations. As mentioned before, the first syllogism establishes that the Buddha is “the protector” who unerringly teaches the four noble truths.

The second syllogism proves, in dependence on “the protector”, that the Buddha possesses the three qualities of *sugata-realizations*.

The third and fourth syllogisms establish that the Buddha is preceded by particular causes. The third syllogism proves, in dependence on *sugata-realizations*, that the Buddha is preceded by “the teacher”, the wisdom realizing selflessness. The fourth syllogism establishes, in dependence on “the teacher”, that the Buddha is preceded by great compassion.

Therefore, in dependence on these syllogisms one comes to understand that — contrary to the assertion of some non-Buddhists — there are correct reasons that prove the existence of the omniscient consciousness.

The way one comes to such an understanding is as follows:

By relying on the second section, which explains the five factors according to the *reverse system*, one initially realizes what the Buddha chiefly teaches: the truth of suffering, the truth of the origin, the truth of cessation and the truth of the path. Having thoroughly understood these, one examines the person who first introduced the four truths — the Buddha himself — and comes to realize “the protector”.

One understands that the Buddha taught the four noble truths through his own power, because without depending on other masters he incontrovertibly realized the nature of these truths. Hence, in dependence on “the protector”, one realizes his *sugata-realizations*.

When examining *sugata-realizations*, one comes to understand that these realizations have not existed naturally since beginningless time, but that they were cultivated by meditating on the wisdom realizing selflessness. Thus, in dependence on *sugata-*

*realizations*, one realizes that the Buddha was preceded by “the teacher”, *i.e.*, that he was preceded by the wisdom realizing selflessness.

Then one comes to understand that familiarizing himself with this wisdom while accumulating merit for three countless eons was only possible because —prior to becoming a Buddha, as a Bodhisattva —he was motivated by the affectionate awareness that is unable to bear sentient beings' suffering. Therefore, in dependence on “the teacher”, one realizes that the Buddha was preceded by the cultivation of great compassion.

Eventually, in dependence on great compassion, one realizes that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*.

In brief, under this heading, Gyalsab Je provides a summary of the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika* by explaining how it reveals the meaning of Dignaga's homage through setting forth the five factors. The five factors are set forth by way of four factors (the one wishing to benefit migrators, “the teacher”, “the sugata”, and “the protector”) serving as proofs or correct reasons that establish the fifth factor: that the Buddha is the *one who has become a valid cognizer, i.e.*, that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*.

Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in dependence on the four factors is divided in two: (1) establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forward system* and (2) establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *reverse system*.

Establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forward system* removes the wrong view that there are no causes that give rise to an omniscient consciousness; while establishing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *reverse system* removes the wrong view that there is no correct reason that establishes an omniscient consciousness.

Therefore, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* can be divided into two sections: (1) the first proves that the Buddha is a valid cognizer by means of the *forward system*; and (2) the second proves that the Buddha is a valid cognizer by means of the *reverse system*.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What are the five factors that appear in the homage of Dignaga's *Compendium of Pramana*?
2. Of the five factors, which one is the object to be proved or established and which one is the proof?
3. What are the two systems that prove/establish the *valid cognizer being*?
4. What is the reason for presenting these two systems?
5. How many syllogisms are presented in the section on the forward system?
6. How many syllogisms are presented in the section on the reverse system?
7. Why do the words, “the one wishing to benefit migrators”, explicitly indicate great compassion?
8. Why do the words, “the teacher” explicitly indicate the wisdom realizing selflessness?
9. How do the syllogisms of the forward system refute the wrong view that there is no cause of an omniscient consciousness?
10. How do the syllogisms of the reverse system refute the wrong view that there is no reason for an omniscient consciousness?

## [DIGNAGA AND DHARMAKIRTI'S] VIEW

In order to accomplish the goal to which they resolutely aspire, those seeking release establish that the Teacher, the Bhagavan, is a valid cognizer by means of establishing that his teachings are faultless.

In order to be able to attain their goals, those seeking release (*i.e.*, liberation or Buddhahood) need to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*. Realizing that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* is necessary in order to rely effectively on the Buddha, engage in continuous practice of his teachings, and eventually attain liberation or Buddhahood.

The understanding that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* is attained when one realizes that he is without fault. Yet, realizing that the Buddha is without fault must be preceded by realizing that his teachings are faultless.

In general, the Buddha's teachings can be categorized into scriptural teachings and experiential teachings. Scriptural teachings refer to the words of the Buddha that convey his teachings, while experiential teachings refer to the meaning these words express.

Therefore, the way one arrives at the realization that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* is as follows: First, one realizes that the experiential teachings of the Buddha are faultless; in dependence on that, one realizes that the scriptural teachings of the Buddha are faultless; and in dependence on that, one realizes that the Buddha himself is without fault— which is equivalent to realizing that he is a *valid cognizer being*.

[Someone:] It follows that it is pointless to establish that the Muni is a valid cognizer in order to accomplish a person's desired goals, because [goals] are accomplished through direct and inferential valid cognizers.

As mentioned before, valid cognizers can be categorized into: (a) direct valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are direct perceivers) and (b) inferential valid cognizers (*i.e.*, valid cognizers that are inferential cognizers).

Direct valid cognizers are non-conceptual knowers that are newly non-deceptive. Examples of direct valid cognizers are the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table, a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness and an omniscient consciousness.

Inferential valid cognizers are conceptual knowers that are newly non-deceptive and arise in dependence on a correct reason. Examples of inferential valid cognizers are the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that there is fire on a mountain pass, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that sound is impermanent, and the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness.

Here someone presents the argument that it is pointless to establish that the Muni, *i.e.*, the Buddha, is a *valid cognizer being* in order to accomplish one's goals, because such goals can be attained by relying on direct or inferential valid cognizers that realize the four noble truths, impermanence, selflessness, and so forth, without having to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*.

[Response:] The Muni is not established to be a valid cognizer for the sake of accomplishing just any goal, but in order to show that the Muni is a valid cognizer with regard to the methods for [attaining] high rebirths and the definite good.

The response to the argument above is that even though it may be possible to accomplish certain goals merely by relying on direct and inferential valid cognizers, the Buddha is not established to be a *valid cognizer being* in order to accomplish just any

goal. Rather, he is established to be a *valid cognizer being* in order to prove that he is a *valid cognizer being* with regard to the methods for attaining high rebirths and definite good ('definite good' refers to liberation or Buddhahood).

The Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* with regard to the methods for attaining high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood because he is able to perfectly teach the methods for attaining those states.

[Someone:] Even if it is for the sake of those goals, it [still] follows that it is pointless to establish that the Muni is a valid cognizer, because you accept that past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are established by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact.

The opponent replies that even if one aspires to attain goals such as high rebirths, liberation or Buddhahood, it is nonetheless pointless to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are only slightly hidden phenomena that can be realized by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact. By means of realizing past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., one comes to realize the existence of high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood.

Having realized high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood one is then able to engage in the practices that lead one to attain either of these states without having to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*.

[Response:] There is no fault. Without initially relying on the teachings of the Blessed One, one will not even think of selflessness or momentariness of the subtle, not to mention realizing them inferentially. When those possessing discernment initially see that the Blessed One uninterruptedly taught that high rebirths, definitive goodness and the reasons establishing these are connected to worldly valid cognizers, they will thoroughly investigate whether what is taught [by the Buddha] really exists or not, and they will realize inferentially the mode [of existence of higher rebirths, definite goodness, etc.].

The response here is that there is no fault with regard to asserting that past and future lives, the four noble truths, etc., are realized by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact. However, one can realize these slightly hidden phenomena (in particular the four noble truths) only by relying on the Buddha's teachings.

Without listening to and contemplating the teachings of the Buddha, one will not even be able to reflect on, for instance, selflessness or *momentariness of the subtle*,<sup>4</sup> not to mention realizing them with an inferential cognizer. This is because the teachings on selflessness are unique to the teachings of the Buddha.

Furthermore, whatever is taught by the Buddha, such as high rebirths, liberation, etc., connects to worldly everyday valid cognition. When those possessing discernment understand this, they will thoroughly investigate the Buddha's teachings and attain inferential realization of the mode of existence of higher rebirths, liberation, and so forth.

Some scholars explain that here Gyaltsab Je agrees that it not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to *realize* hidden phenomena such as

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<sup>4</sup>Some scholars explain that here 'momentariness of the subtle' refers to: 'impermanence *that is characterized by selflessness*' (with 'the subtle' referring to selflessness). In order to realize *impermanence that is characterized by selflessness* on the basis of, for instance, a person, one first generates an awareness realizing the person's selflessness, and then an awareness realizing the person's impermanence. The later awareness realizing the person's *impermanence* is the awareness realizing the person's *impermanence that is characterized by selflessness*, for its realization of the person's impermanence is enhanced by the earlier awareness (realizing the person's selflessness). Therefore, even though the earlier awareness lies dormant at the time of the later awareness, nonetheless, it affects the later awareness, which is why the later awareness is said to be 'conjoined with' the earlier awareness.

liberation and Buddhahood; although in order to realize liberation and Buddhahood, it is necessary to rely on listening to and contemplating the Buddha's teachings. Furthermore, those possessing discernment are able to comprehend that the Buddha repeatedly taught that hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood connect to worldly everyday things (which are easy to understand), and through thorough analysis, they are able to realize these hidden phenomena.

According to those scholars, that response implies that even though it is not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to *realize* or understand liberation or Buddhahood, it is necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to *attain* liberation or Buddhahood. The reason is that unless practitioners of the Buddha Dharma realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, they will not be able to cultivate the type of firm and unwavering faith in the Buddha required to follow his instructions and practice over countless lifetimes, and even eons, until they attain their goals.

In brief, under this heading, Gyaltsab Je explains that those seeking release need to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to be able to engage in effective and continuous practice and eventually attain liberation or Buddhahood. However, before being able to realize that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being, *i.e.*, that he is without fault, they need to realize that his teachings are faultless.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Is it necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to realize hidden phenomena such as liberation and Buddhahood?
2. Why does one have to rely on the Buddha's teachings in order to realize liberation and Buddhahood?
3. Does one have to rely on the Buddha's teachings in order to realize selflessness or subtle impermanence?
4. Why do those seeking release have to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to attain liberation or Buddhahood?
5. What are the steps that lead to the realization that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*?
6. What is the opponent's main reason why it is not necessary to realize that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* in order to attain liberation or omniscience?
7. What is the meaning of experiential teachings?
8. What is the meaning of scriptural teachings?
9. Does one have to realize that *all* the teachings of the Buddha are faultless in order to be able to realize that he is a *valid cognizer being*?
10. By realizing that some of the Buddha's teachings are faultless one is able to realize that the Buddha is faultless with regard to those teachings. But how is one able to realize that the Buddha is faultless with regard to all of his teachings?

## **THE MEANING OF THE BRANCHES**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Establishing that the Muni is *pramana*
- (2) The purpose of praising [the Muni] on account of [being] *pramana*.

## **ESTABLISHING THAT THE MUNI IS PRAMANA**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Showing by means of the forward system the manner in which the teacher arrived [at his goal] through what paths
- (2) Showing by means of the reverse system the reason for the Buddha having arrived [at his goal]

## **SHOWING BY MEANS OF THE FORWARD SYSTEM THE MANNER IN WHICH THE TEACHER ARRIVED [AT HIS GOAL] THROUGH WHAT PATHS**

This marks the beginning of the first section, which proves that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* by means of the *forwardsystem*. Thus, it also marks the beginning of Gyaltsab Je explaining the verses of the second chapter of Dharmakirti's *Pramanavarttika*.

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying the instance of a *pramana being* by way of explaining the meaning of 'the one who has become a valid cognizer'
- (2) Identifying the definition of a *pramana being* by way of explaining the four remaining [factors]
- (3) Identifying the paths that lead to [the state of being a *pramana being*].

## **IDENTIFYING THE INSTANCE OF A PRAMANABEING BY EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF THE ONE WHO HAS BECOME PRAMANA**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The general definition of *pramana*
- (2) Showing that the Muni also possesses that definition (*i.e.*, that the Muni is a *pramana being* or that he possesses *pramana*)

## **THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF PRAMANA**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The nature of the definition
- (2) The attribute

## **THE NATURE OF THE DEFINITION**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The definition
- (2) The instances
- (3) Ascertaining that the instances [satisfy] the definition



## THE DEFINITION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying *Non-Deceptive*
- (2) Dispelling [the objection of] non-pervasion (*i.e.*, refuting the objection that the definition of *pramana* is too narrow)
- (3) Dispelling [the view of a] broad pervasion (*i.e.*, refuting the objection that the definition is too broad)

## IDENTIFYING NON-DECEPTIVE

[Someone:] The realization of objects of comprehension—high rebirths, the definite good and the methods [that lead to those goals]—depends on valid cognizers. If only the Muni is *pramana* with regard to [realizing] those objects in their entirety, what is the definition of a general *pramana* which is such that by satisfying that definition [a consciousness] becomes *pramana*?

Here someone asks, if the realization of goals such as high rebirths, liberation, Buddhahood and the paths that lead to these states depend on *pramana* or valid cognizers, and if only the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* (while non-Buddhist teachers, etc., are not), what is the definition of a valid cognizer?

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness.*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, a direct *pramana* apprehending blue, it is ***pramana*** (*i.e.*, a valid cognizer), because it **isa consciousness** that is newly **non-deceptive**.

The definition of *pramana* or a valid cognizer is: a consciousness or knower that is newly non-deceptive. As mentioned above, ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ refers to an awareness that newly realizes its main object.

Therefore, the subject, a consciousness that is newly non-deceptive with regard to blue, it is a valid cognizer because it is ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’. It is newly non-deceptive with regard to blue because it newly realizes its main object, blue.

[Someone:] If a consciousness is *pramana*, it follows that it is pointless to present the definition of *pramana* in the commentaries, because when a self-knower perceives a consciousness, it also perceives the non-deceptiveness that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with [the consciousness].

The argument presented here mentions a type of awareness called "self-knower". Followers of the Sautrantika, Chittamatra, and Yogachara-Svatantrika schools of Buddhism propound the existence of self-knowers, and since the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is presented from the point of view of the Sautrantika Following Reasoning, self-knowers are asserted here.

According to Buddhist philosophers who accept self-knowers, there are two types of consciousness: (a) other-knowers and (b) self-knowers.

An other-knower is an awareness that is “directed outwards” and perceives phenomena other than a consciousness that is of one nature with itself. Examples are the five sense direct perceivers and conceptual consciousnesses.

A self-knower is a mental consciousness that directly perceives an awareness that is of one nature with itself. Examples of self-knowers are a self-knower that perceives an eye consciousness apprehending a tree, a self-knower that perceives an ear consciousness

apprehending a song, a self-knower that perceives an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness, and so forth.

All awarenesses have a self-knower. That self-knower is simultaneous and of one substantial entity or of one nature with the awareness it perceives. The self-knower is simultaneous with the awareness it perceives, for the self-knower and the awareness it perceives arise and go out of existence simultaneously. Also, they are of one substantial entity or of one nature because the self-knower and the awareness it perceives are different aspects of the same consciousness. This means that one part of the awareness (the other-knower) is "directed outwards", for it apprehends phenomena such as shapes, colours, sounds, etc., while the other part (the self-knower) is "directed inwards" and perceives the other-knower.

The self-knower of an eye consciousness apprehending a tree, for instance, is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the eye consciousness apprehending the tree. Unlike the sense consciousness it perceives, it is not a sense consciousness but a mental direct perceiver that perceives *the eye consciousness apprehending the tree*. Therefore, the self-knower of the eye consciousness apprehending the tree is a mental consciousness that is a direct perceiver, for it directly realizes its main object, the *eye consciousness apprehending the tree*. It is not self-awareness or introspection and plays only a small role in spiritual practice.

Likewise, the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness has a self-knower that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity or of one nature with the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness. That self-knower is a mental direct perceiver that directly realizes its main object, the conceptual consciousness realizing selflessness.

The reason for asserting self-knowers is to explain the memory of perception. When our eye consciousness has perceived a tree, later on we are able to remember the tree. The memory of the tree is possible owing to our eye consciousness having previously seen the tree.

But not only are we able to remember the tree, we are also able to remember that we *saw* the tree. That memory is the result of the self-knower that perceived the eye consciousness apprehending the tree. Thus, self-knowers are responsible for the memory of *perceiving* something.

The analogy used for a self-knower is a lamp that illuminates itself (self-knower) while it also illuminates other phenomena (other-knower).

Returning to the argument presented here: it concerns self-knowers that perceive valid cognizers (since every valid cognizer has a self-knower that perceives it). When a self-knower perceiving a valid cognizer realizes its main object—the valid cognizer – it also realizes the *non-deceptiveness* of the valid cognizer that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knower, because it realizes the valid cognizer that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knower. It realizes the non-deceptiveness of the valid cognizer because it realizes the defining functions (or characteristics) of that valid cognizer. Therefore, the self-knower realizes the definition of the valid cognizer, *i.e.*, it realizes 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive'.

This is why the opponent argues that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the commentaries of the *Pramana* literature, for everyone already *knows* the definition of a valid cognizer. Everyone knows the definition of a valid cognizer because many of our awarenesses are valid cognizers, and since each of those valid cognizers has its own self-knower, every one of those self-knowers realizes the defining functions of the valid cognizer it perceives. Since the self-knower realizes the defining functions of the valid cognizer it perceives, it also realizes the definition of the valid cognizer it perceives (*i.e.*, it realizes "a knower that is newly non-deceptive"). Thus, many of our self-knowers have realized the definition of a valid cognizer, which is why we already know the definition of a valid cognizer.

[Dharmakirti says in the ***Pramanavarttika***:]

[If] *being able to perform a function abides:*  
*Non-deceptive.....*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, objects of knowledge, it does not follow that [a self-knower] fully realizes [that the *pramana* the self-knower perceives] is non-deceptive merely by experiencing the nature [of that *pramana*], because if **being able to perform the functions** of [for instance] cooking, scorching, etc., **abides** the way it is comprehended [by a *pramana* apprehending a fire, that *pramana*] is **non-deceptive** with regard to these functions. However, there is no certainty [that the self-knower perceiving the *pramana* apprehending the fire realizes that the *pramana* apprehending the fire is non-deceptive] merely by experiencing the nature [of that *pramana*].

Our own system's response to the argument above is that in general, a *pramana* or valid cognizer realizing fire is non-deceptive with respect to the defining functions the fire is able to perform, such as cooking, scorching, etc. Likewise, the self-knower that perceives that valid cognizer realizing fire is non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of that valid cognizer, and thus with regard to the definition of the valid cognizer.

However, there are some exceptions, for there are self-knowers that realize the general nature of a valid cognizer without realizing that valid cognizer completely with its defining functions, to the extent of being able to identify it as a valid cognizer and therefore as non-deceptive.

For example, followers of the non-Buddhist *Lokayata* or *Charvaka* system only assert the existence of *direct* valid cognizers; they do not assert the existence of *inferential* valid cognizers, although inferential valid cognizers do arise in their mental continuum. Followers of the *Lokayata* system do not assert the existence of inferential valid cognizers, for they contend that only direct perceivers are able to realize an object; they do not accept that it is possible to realize an object in dependence on correct reasons.

When an inferential valid cognizer realizing the presence of fire on a mountain pass arises in the continuum of a follower of the *Lokayata*, the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the fire, *i.e.*, it realizes the fire. The inferential valid cognizer also realizes the fire's defining functions of, for instance, cooking, scorching, etc. Therefore, the inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to these functions.

Furthermore, the self-knower that perceives the inferential valid cognizer realizes the general nature of that valid cognizer, for it realizes the *awareness* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass.

However, since a follower of the *Lokayata* system takes the position that there are no inferential valid cognizers, the self-knower of his inferential valid cognizer does not realize the *inferential valid cognizer* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass. As the self-knower does not realize the *inferential valid cognizer* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass, it does not realize the defining functions (and thus the definition) of that inferential valid cognizer. This means that it does not realize the determinative knower that in dependence on its basis, a correct sign, is newly *non-deceptive* with regard to its object of comprehension, a hidden phenomenon<sup>5</sup> (*i.e.*, the presence of fire on the mountain pass).

Therefore, the self-knower of that inferential valid cognizer perceives or realizes the general nature of that inferential valid cognizer (*i.e.*, it realizes the *consciousness* apprehending the presence of fire on the mountain pass), but it does not realize that the

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<sup>5</sup>The definition of an *inferential valid cognizer* is: A determinative knower that in dependence on its basis, a correct sign, is newly non-deceptive with regard to its object of comprehension, a hidden phenomenon.

inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the presence of fire on the mountain pass.

This example illustrates that it is for the sake of those who, on account of holding wrong views, etc., are unable to identify a valid cognizer that the definition of a valid cognizer is provided in the commentaries of the *Pramana* literature.

In brief, under this outline Gyaltsab Je introduces the definition of a valid cognizer, in particular the aspect of the definition of being “non-deceptive” ( “*Pramana is a non-deceptive awareness*”).

An awareness is non-deceptive with regard to a particular object because it realizes the defining functions that object is able to perform. For instance, fire is able to perform the functions of cooking, scorching, etc. Hence, an inferential valid cognizer that realizes fire on a mountain pass is non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of fire (“[If] being able to perform a function abides: / Non-deceptive...”).

But even though, in general, a consciousness perceiving fire is non-deceptive with regard to the fire and the defining functions of fire, and the self-knower of a valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the valid cognizer and the defining functions of the valid cognizer (i.e., it realizes that the valid cognizer is non-deceptive, etc.), nonetheless, owing to various misperceptions, it is necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *pramana* literature.

One of the qualities of a valid cognizer is that it is non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of its main object. By being non-deceptive with regard to the defining functions of its main object, a valid cognizer enables the person in whose continuum it arises to obtain a desired object.

For instance, a valid cognizer realizing a camp fire, arising in the continuum of a person who feels cold, enables that person to seek out the fire and warm himself. Likewise a valid cognizer realizing water, arising in the continuum of a person who is thirsty, enables that person to quench his thirst.

On the other hand, a wrong consciousness that wrongly perceives, for instance, a mirage of water to be water does not enable the person to obtain the water.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the definition of a valid cognizer?
2. What is an example of a valid cognizer?
3. What is the meaning of being non-deceptive?
4. What is the meaning of being newly non-deceptive?
5. What is a self-knower?
6. What does a self-knower realize?
7. Why is a self-knower simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the awareness it perceives?
8. What is an other-knower?
9. Why does an opponent argue that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *Pramana* commentaries?
10. What is the response to the argument that it is not necessary to posit the definition of a valid cognizer in the *Pramana* commentaries?
11. What type of valid cognizer do the followers of the Lokayata system assert and what type of valid cognizer do they not assert?

**DISPELLING [THE OBJECTION OF] NON-PERVASION [*i.e.*, REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION OF A VALID COGNIZER IS TOO NARROW]**

[Someone:] Since non-deceptiveness with regard to function has the meaning of obtaining an object, and since no one can obtain a sound, etc., an auditory consciousness does not satisfy the definition.

Here someone objects to Dharmakīrti's definition of a valid cognizer, arguing that the definition is too narrow. The definition is too narrow because not all valid cognizers satisfy the definition. Not all valid cognizers satisfy the definition because, according to the opponent, whatever is a valid cognizer is not necessarily 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive'. Whatever is a valid cognizer is not necessarily 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' because whatever is a valid cognizer is *not* necessarily non-deceptive. As an example of an awareness that is a valid cognizer but *not* non-deceptive, the opponent cites a valid cognizer that is an auditory consciousness (*e.g.*, an ear consciousness apprehending an explanation by another person).

The opponent asserts that an auditory consciousness is *not* non-deceptive because an auditory consciousness is *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object, sound. An auditory consciousness is *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object, sound, because an auditory consciousness does not enable the person in whose continuum the auditory consciousness arises to obtain the sound.

This argument arises from the opponent's position that a valid cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of an object only if it enables the person in whose continuum the valid cognizer arises to obtain the object.

For instance, an eye consciousness realizing a book (and thus the functions of the book) is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of the book because the eye consciousness enables the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness arises to obtain or get the book.

However, sound or a flash of lightning are objects one cannot obtain, for they are not tangible and only exist for a short time. Therefore, the opponent holds that an ear consciousness realizing the words of another person and an eye consciousness realizing a flash of lightning are *not* non-deceptive. They are *not* non-deceptive because they are *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of their main object. They are *not* non-deceptive with regard to the functions of their main objects (the words of the other person and the flash of lightning), because the person in whose continuum these awarenesses arise is unable to obtain the words and the flash of lightning.

In short, even though the opponent contends that the first moment of an ear consciousness realizing the words of another person and the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a flash of lightning are both valid cognizers (since they are awarenesses that newly realize their main object) he asserts that they are not 'knowers that are newly *non-deceptive*' and, therefore, do not satisfy Dharmakīrti's definition of a valid cognizer.

Hence, the opponent argues that Dharmakirti's definition is too narrow, for it does not include all valid cognizers.<sup>6</sup>

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

... arisen from sound, too  
Because it indicates [its] desired [object]. (1)

[Response:] Regarding the subject, an auditory consciousness that has **arisen from** its apprehended object, **sound**, it is free from the fault of not being suitable to [satisfy the definition of] *pramana*, **because it** is a consciousness that newly **indicates** (*i.e.*, realizes) its **desired** object of comprehension. The word "**too**" ("... arisen from sound, too") includes a *pramana* that sees a flash of lightning, and so on.

In response to the opponent's argument, our own system cites, 'an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, sound'. 'An auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, sound' refers to an ear consciousness apprehending sound, such as, for instance, the first moment of an ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person.<sup>7</sup>

According to our own system, the subject, the first moment of an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its apprehended object, sound, is free from the fault of not being suitable to satisfy Dharmakirti's definition of a valid cognizer, because it is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object. It is non-deceptive with regard to the functions of its main object because it is a consciousness that newly indicates, *i.e.*, realizes its desired object of comprehension.

In other words, an auditory consciousness, such as the first moment of an ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person, is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' because it newly understands its desired object of comprehension, the words of the other person. The words of the other person are the desired object of comprehension of that ear consciousness because they are the main object the ear

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<sup>6</sup> The opponent's view is similar to the view of some Indian Buddhist scholars, such as Dharmakirti's disciple Shakyabodhi, who hold that an eye consciousness that mistakenly perceives the glow of a jewel to be an actual jewel, and an eye consciousness that perceives a white conch shell to be a yellow conch shell are valid cognizers, for they enable the person in whose continuum these two eye consciousnesses arise to obtain the jewel and the conch shell. Hence according to these scholars, there is a common locus between a valid cognizer and a wrong consciousness (*i.e.*, an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object).

According to our own system this is not correct, for there is no common locus between a valid cognizer and an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object, and thus an eye consciousness perceiving the glow of a jewel to be an actual jewel and an eye consciousness perceiving a yellow conch shell are not accepted to be valid cognizers.

However, this assertion by our own system gives rise to the following debate: Regarding the subject, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the moon, it follows that it is not a valid cognizer, because it is a wrong consciousness. It is a wrong consciousness because it is an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object, the moon. Regarding the subject, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the moon, it follows that it is an awareness that is mistaken with regard to its main object, the moon, because it perceives a perfectly round and small moon, while in reality the moon is neither perfectly round nor small.

<sup>7</sup> An ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person is an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, sound, because it is an auditory consciousness that has arisen from its *apprehended object*, the words of another person. The words of the other person are the *apprehended object* of that ear consciousness because the words of the other person are the *observed object condition* of that ear consciousness. The *apprehended object* (*gzung don*) of an awareness and the *observed object condition* (*dmigs skyen*) of an awareness are equivalent (*i.e.*, they are different terms for the same referent object).

The *observed object condition* of an awareness refers to an object that is both (1) the direct (*i.e.*, immediately preceding) cause that gives rise to the awareness and (2) the appearing object of that awareness.

In the case of the ear consciousness perceiving the words of another person, the words of the other person are the *observed object condition* of the ear consciousness because they are (1) the direct (*i.e.*, immediately preceding) cause that gives rise to the ear consciousness and (2) the appearing object of that ear consciousness.

consciousness comprehends or realizes, and because the person in whose continuum the ear consciousness arises wants to hear those words.

Therefore, in order for an awareness to be non-deceptive with regard to its main object, the person in whose continuum the awareness arises does not have to be able to obtain the object; it is sufficient for the awareness to realize the object that the person, in whose continuum the awareness arises, wants to hear.

In the *Pramanavarttika*, the word “too” in the line, “... arisen from sound, too” includes, for instance, the first moment of an eye consciousness perceiving a flash of lightning. As before, even though the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness arises is unable to obtain the flash of lightning, the eye consciousness is nonetheless ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ because it newly realizes its desired object of comprehension, the flash of lightning.

[Someone:] Since the shastras are *pramana* with regard to all objects of knowledge, one is able to accomplish one’s desired goals. What, then, is the use of establishing that the Muni is a *pramana* [being]?

As mentioned before, in a Buddhist context, *pramana* is a Sanskrit term that is usually translated as “valid cognizer”. However, since this second opponent’s argument reflects the view of the non-Buddhist Vedanta system, this translation is not appropriate.

Traditional Vedanta considers scriptural evidence as the most authentic means of knowledge, while direct perception and inferential cognition are considered to be subordinate. According to the Vedantists, the shastras, *i.e.*, the spiritual treatises such as the Vedas, are *pramana* with regard to all objects of knowledge, for they are the most authentic and valid source of knowledge.

Along the same lines, the opponent argues here that it is not necessary to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being*, since the Buddhist shastras or treatises are the most valid source of knowledge and therefore *pramana*. Hence, by understanding that high rebirths and definite good (*i.e.*, liberation or Buddhahood) were taught in the Buddhist treatises, one is able to realize and eventually attain high rebirths, liberation or Buddhahood.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*The objects the speaker does [wish to express],  
Some entity is fully clear to the awareness,  
[Expressive] sound with regard to those is pramana,  
Not a cause-possessing [reason] of the very entities. (2)*

[Response:] It follows that the expressive sounds (*i.e.*, the words) of the treatises, etc., are **not** a correct **cause-possessing** resultant reason that brings forth understanding of high rebirths, definite good, and so forth, which are the **very entities** expressed [by those words], because expressive **sound with regard to those** (high rebirths and definite good) **is pramana**, that is, a correct reason, which—[based on the syllogism’s subject that is] the basis of the property of the subject—brings forth understanding in the listener’s **awareness of some fully clear entity** [with regard to] **the objects** of engagement the **speaker does** wish to express.

Alternatively, the meaning of the former text [passage] can be applied so as to accord with the latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound.

Our own system's response to the opponent's argument is that it is not sufficient to understand that high rebirths, etc., are taught in the Buddhist treatises<sup>8</sup>, because the expressive sounds, *i.e.*, the words of the treatises that teach high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood, cannot be cited as a correct reason that establishes the existence of high rebirths, liberation and Buddhahood. This is because, in general, a word cannot be cited as a correct reason in order to establish the object or entity expressed by the word.

For instance, the word "table" expresses table but it does not establish the existence of a table. Therefore, the following is an incorrect syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, in a classroom in which someone utters the word "table", there is a table because there is the word "table".*

This is an incorrect syllogism because the reason of the syllogism (the word "table") is neither of one nature with the predicate of the syllogism (table) nor the result of that predicate.

Please note that one of the criteria of a correct syllogism is that the reason of the syllogism must either be of one nature with the predicate of the syllogism or the result of that predicate. If the reason does not relate to the predicate by way of being of one nature with it or by way of being its result, the reason cannot logically establish the predicate. Hence, the word "table" cannot logically establish a table.

Similarly, the following is an incorrect syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, high rebirths and definite good, they exist, because the treatises that teach them exist.*

The words of the Buddhist treatises that teach high rebirths and definite good are neither of one nature with high rebirths and definite good nor their result. Therefore, those treatises cannot be cited as a correct reason that establishes the existence of high rebirths and definite good. In other words, it is not possible to establish high rebirths, liberation, etc., by arguing that they exist because they are taught in the Buddhist scriptures.

Gyalsab Je formulates this response in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* by saying, "It follows that the expressive sounds (*i.e.*, the words) of the treatises, etc., are **not** a correct **cause-possessing** resultant reason that brings forth understanding of high rebirths, definite good, and so forth, which are the **very entities** expressed [by those words]" (p. 35).

This means that the words of the treatises that teach high rebirths, etc., are not a correct resultant reason that establishes the actual entities that are expressed by these words, namely high rebirths, definite good, etc.

Here a 'cause-possessing resultant reason' is a specific type of reason, called a "resultant reason". A resultant reason refers to the reason of a syllogism that is the result of the predicate of that same syllogism.<sup>9</sup>

As mentioned above, for a reason to be the correct reason of a syllogism it must either be of one nature with the syllogism's predicate or the result of that predicate. Here, by saying that the words of the treatises are not a 'cause-possessing resultant reason' that establishes the objects expressed by the words, Gyalsab Je states, explicitly, that the

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<sup>8</sup>A Buddhist treatise is a reliable commentary on the Buddhist teachings. Also, please note that sutras, treatises, etc., refer to the spoken words they contain — the expressive sounds — and not to the printed pages.

<sup>9</sup>For instance, smoke is a resultant reason of the following syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, on a smoky mountain pass, there is fire because there is smoke.*

Smoke is the resultant reason of that syllogism because it is the result of the predicate of that syllogism, fire.



words of the treatises are not the result of the objects they express and, implicitly, that they are not of one nature with the objects they express.

Our own system then continues the response to the opponent's argument by saying that even though expressive sounds cannot serve as a correct reason that establishes the objects expressed by those words, expressive sounds serve as a correct reason that establishes that the speaker of the expressive sounds has the motivation to say those words.

Therefore, the following is considered to be a correct syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, the expressive sound "table" that is uttered by John, its speaker (i.e., John) has the motivation to say "table", because it is the expressive sound "table".*

In this case, the reason, the expressive sound "table", is that syllogism's correct reason because it is a correct resultant reason that establishes that the speaker of the expressive sound "table" has the motivation to say "table".

The expressive sound "table" is the *resultant* reason of that syllogism because it is the result of the predicate, i.e., the speaker's motivation to say "table". The expressive sound "table" is the result of the speaker's motivation to say "table" because an expressive sound is necessarily preceded by its cause, the speaker's motivation to express the sound.

Similarly, the following is considered to be a correct syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, definite good, etc., its speaker has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, definite good, etc., because it is expressive sound that presents high rebirths, definite good, etc.*

As before, the reason of the syllogism (i.e., expressive sound that sets forth high rebirths, definite good, etc.) is a correct resultant reason that establishes that the speaker of the treatise has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, definite good, etc.

This is essentially what Gyalsab Je explains when he says, "expressive **sound with regard to those** (high rebirths and definite good) **ispramana**, that is, a correct reason, which — [based on the syllogism's subject that is] the basis of the property of the subject — brings forth understanding in the listener's **awareness of some fully clear entity** [with regard to] **the objects of engagement the speaker does wish to express**" (p. 35).

In other words, Gyalsab Je says that expressive sound that sets forth high rebirths, definite good, and so forth, is *pramana*, i.e., a correct reason which—based on the syllogism's subject, i.e., a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, definite good, etc.,—establishes in the mind of the person listening to the treatise some fully clear entity, i.e., the speakers' motivation with regard to the objects of engagement (i.e., high rebirths, definite good, etc.) that the speaker wishes to express.

Here "*pramana*" means a correct reason; "the basis of the property of the subject" refers to the subject of the syllogism; and "some fully clear entity with regard to the objects of engagement that the speaker does wish to express" refers to the speaker's motivation to express high rebirths, definite good, etc.

However, some scholars disagree with the two syllogisms above, since they hold that expressive sound is *not* necessarily preceded by the speaker's motivation to express the sound. As an example, they cite a person who intends to say "chair" but says "table" by mistake. In this case, the expressive sound "table" is not preceded by the motivation to say "table", but by the motivation to say "chair".

Therefore, according to these scholars: whatever is the expressive sound "table" is not necessarily preceded by its cause, the speaker's motivation to say "table"; and whatever is expressive sound that sets forth high rebirths, definite good, etc., is not necessarily preceded by the speaker's motivation to present high rebirths, etc. Instead, these

scholars assert that only expressive sound that is *free from the five conditions* is necessarily preceded by the speaker's motivation to express the sound.

The *five conditions* are: (1) saying something owing to being mentally ill, (2) saying something while being asleep, (3) saying something out of familiarity, (4) repeating something after someone, and (5) saying something by mistake.

Thus, according to these scholars, the following are correct syllogisms:

*Regarding the subject, the expressive sound "table" that is uttered by John and is free from the five conditions, its speaker has the motivation to say "table", because it is the expressive sound "table" that is free from the five conditions.*

and:

*Regarding the subject, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, definite good, etc., its speaker has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, definite good, etc., because it is expressive sound presenting high rebirths, definite good, etc., which is free from the five conditions.*

Some scholars argue that whatever is expressive sound that is free from the five conditions is not necessarily preceded by the motivation to express the sound, because the words of the Buddha are expressive sounds that are free from the five conditions but they are not preceded by the Buddha's motivation to speak these words. They are not preceded by the Buddha's motivation to speak these words because a motivation is necessarily a conceptual consciousness whereas a Buddha has overcome all conceptual consciousnesses.

In reply to this argument, other scholars allege either that the words of the Buddha are not expressive sounds or that a motivation is not necessarily a conceptual consciousness.

However, these are only minor disagreements which, although often debated, do not contradict our own system's above-mentioned response to the opponent who asserts that it is not necessary to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because Buddhist treatises are *pramana*.

With this response, our own system further establishes that there is: a valid cognizer that has arisen from the correct reason, sound. An example of this type of valid cognizer is the inferential valid cognizer realizing the main 'object to be established' (the *thesis*) of the following syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, etc., its speaker has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc., because it is expressive sound presenting high rebirths, etc.*

In other words, an example of 'a valid cognizer that has arisen from the correct reason, sound' is the inferential valid cognizer realizing that "the speaker of a Buddhist treatise which teaches high rebirths, etc., has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc."

That inferential valid cognizer is 'a valid cognizer that has arisen from the correct reason, sound' because it is an inferential valid cognizer that has arisen from its cause, the correct reason of the above-mentioned syllogism, "expressive *sound* presenting high rebirths, etc."

"Expressive sound presenting high rebirths, etc." is the cause of that valid cognizer, because the valid cognizer has come to realize that "the speaker of a Buddhist treatise which teaches high rebirths, etc., has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc." in dependence on contemplating the correct reason, "expressive sound presenting high rebirths, etc."

Consequently, according to our own system, there are two types of valid cognizer that have arisen from sound: (1) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *apprehended object*, sound; and (2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound.

The first type of valid cognizer, '(1) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *apprehended object*, sound' is a *direct* valid cognizer (*i.e.*, a valid cognizer that is a direct perceiver), which is explained above (footnote 7, p. 34). An example of such a valid direct perceiver is the above-mentioned auditory consciousness perceiving the words of another person (p. 34).

Above our own system explained that even though the person in whose continuum such an auditory consciousness arises is unable to obtain the words of the other person, the ear consciousness is, nonetheless, 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' because it newly realizes its desired object of comprehension, the words of the other person.

Alternatively, that same explanation can also be applied to: '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound'.

Hence, Gyaltsab Je says: "Alternatively, the meaning of the former text [passage] can be applied so as to accord with the latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound."

The "former text [passage]" here refers to the following one and a half lines from the *Pramanavarttika*: "... arisen from sound, too / Because it indicates [its] desired [object]."

The "latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound" refers to the latter of the two types of valid cognizers, *i.e.*, '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound'.

The way the former text passage can be applied to the "latter [*pramana* that] has arisen from sound" is as follows:

Regarding the subject, an inferential valid cognizer that has **arisen from** the correct reason, **sound** (*e.g.*, the above-mentioned inferential valid cognizer realizing that 'the speaker of a Buddhist treatise which teaches high rebirths, etc., has the motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc.'), it is free from the fault of not being suitable to satisfy the definition of a valid cognizer, because even though the person in whose continuum the valid cognizer arises is unable to obtain the valid cognizer's object of comprehension ('the speaker's motivation to set forth high rebirths, etc.'), nonetheless, the valid cognizer is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' **because it** newly **indicates**, *i.e.*, **realizes** its **desired** object of comprehension.

The object of comprehension is the valid cognizer's *desired* object because it is the object that the person (in whose continuum the valid cognizer arises) wants to realize.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who argues that 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' does not qualify as the definition of a valid cognizer because the definition is too narrow. It is too narrow because, according to this opponent, the meaning of being non-deceptive with regard to the functions of an object is *being able to obtain the object*. Therefore, a valid cognizer that has arisen from sound, for instance, is *not* non-deceptive because it is not possible to obtain sound.

Our own system's response to this debate is that: like a valid cognizer realizing a flash of lightning, '(1) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *apprehended object*, sound' or '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound' is a knower that is newly non-deceptive because it indicates, *i.e.*, realizes, its desired object ("... arisen from sound, too / Because it indicates [its] desired [object]").

In particular, '(2) a valid cognizer that has arisen from the *correct reason*, sound' may be able to realize — in dependence on expressive sound — the motivation to utter some words in the continuum of another person who speaks those words. This is because expressive sound, such

as a Buddhist treatise, is *pramana* (i.e., a correct proof or reason) that brings forth understanding in the awareness of the person listening to the treatise of some fully clear entity, i.e., of the motivation of the treatise's speaker, with regard to the objects the speaker wishes to express.

In other words, expressive sound is a correct reason that establishes (for the person listening to the treatise) the speaker's motivation to express whatever the treatise teaches. ("*The objects the speaker does [wish to express], / Some entity is fully clear to the awareness, / [Expressive] sound with regard to those is pramana*")

However, a Buddhist treatise that teaches high rebirths, etc., is not a correct cause-possessing, i.e., resultant reason that establishes the very entities it expresses, namely high rebirths, etc., ("*Not a cause-possessing [reason] of the very entities.*")

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. According to the first opponent (of this outline), what is the meaning of non-deceptive?
2. How does the opponent's assertion regarding the meaning of non-deceptive lead him to claim that our own system's definition of a valid cognizer is too narrow?
3. How does our own system refute the opponent's claim that our own system's definition is too narrow?
4. What are the two types of valid cognizers that have arisen from sound? Please think of an example for each of them? In what way have the two types arisen from sound?
5. In the *Pramanavarttika*, what awareness does the word "too" in the line, "... arisen from sound, too" include?
6. What is the assertion of the second opponent (of this outline), which reflects the view of the non-Buddhist Vedanta system?
7. What is our own system's response to the second opponent?
8. Why is expressive sound not able to serve as a correct reason that establishes what it (i.e., the expressive sound) expresses?
9. Expressive sound is a correct reason of what syllogism? In other words, of what *object that is to be established* (the *thesis*) does expressive sound serve as a correct reason? What is a resultant reason?
10. Is expressive sound necessarily preceded by the motivation to express the sound?
11. What is the meaning of the following sentence from the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, "Alternatively, the meaning of the former text [passage] can be applied so as to accord with the latter [valid cognizer that] has arisen from sound."

## DISPELLING [THE VIEW OF A] BROAD PERVASION (I.E., REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION IS TOO BROAD)

[Someone:] It follows that a subsequent cognizer is also *pramana* (i.e., a valid cognizer), because it has non-deceptiveness.

Here someone objects to Dharmakirti's definition of *pramana*, i.e., a valid cognizer, arguing that the definition is too broad. Since Dharmakirti previously only identified a valid cognizer's attribute of being 'non-deceptive' without explicitly mentioning that a valid cognizer must be *newly* non-deceptive [*"Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness"*], the opponent mistakenly believes that the definition of a valid cognizer is 'a knower that is non-deceptive'. However, 'a knower that is non-deceptive' is too broad to serve as the definition of a valid cognizer, for whatever is 'a knower that is non-deceptive' is not necessarily a valid cognizer. In other words, not only valid cognizers but all awarenesses that realize their objects are knowers that are non-deceptive.

For instance, a subsequent cognizer is 'a knower that is non-deceptive'. However, it is not a valid cognizer because it does not *newly* realize its object. A subsequent cognizer does not newly realize its object because it realizes its object in *dependence on* or *through the power* of a former valid cognizer that realized the same object. A subsequent cognizer realizes its object through the power of a former valid cognizer because a subsequent cognizer is induced by that valid cognizer. Therefore, a subsequent cognizer is defined as: 'a knower that is not a valid cognizer and that realizes what has already been realized by a former valid cognizer inducing it'.

A subsequent cognizer can be a sense direct perceiver, a mental direct perceiver or a conceptual consciousness.

Examples of a subsequent cognizer that is a sense direct perceiver are the second moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table, the third moment of an ear consciousness realizing the sound of water, and so forth. The second moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes a table that has already been realized by the *first moment* of the eye consciousness (realizing a table) which induced the second moment of the eye consciousness. Likewise, the third moment of an ear consciousness realizing the sound of water is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes the sound of water that has already been realized by the *first moment* of the ear consciousness (realizing the sound of water) which induced the (second and) third moment.

Examples of a subsequent cognizer that is a mental direct perceiver are the second moment of a self-knower realizing a tongue consciousness apprehending a sandwich, the fourth moment of a yogic direct perceiver realizing that the five aggregates are in the nature of suffering, and so on. They are subsequent cognizers because they realize objects (i.e., a tongue consciousness apprehending a sandwich and that the five aggregates are in the nature of suffering) that have already been realized by a former valid cognizer (the *first moment* of the self-knower realizing the tongue consciousness apprehending a sandwich and the *first moment* of the yogic direct perceiver realizing that the five aggregates are in the nature of suffering) which induced the subsequent cognizers.

Examples of a subsequent cognizer that is a conceptual consciousness are the second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing a sprout's impermanence, a memory consciousness realizing the smell of perfume, etc. The second moment of an inferential cognizer realizing a sprout's impermanence is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes the sprout's impermanence that has previously been realized by the *first moment* of the inferential cognizer (realizing the sprout's impermanence) which induced the second moment. Similarly, a memory consciousness realizing the smell of perfume is a subsequent cognizer because it realizes the smell of perfume that has previously been realized by a former moment of a valid cognizer realizing the smell of perfume (for

instance, the first moment of a nose consciousness realizing the smell of perfume) which induced the memory.

Returning to the argument presented here: the opponent contends that it is not correct to assert that ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is the definition of a valid cognizer, for that definition includes awarenesses other than valid cognizers.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since it apprehends the [already] apprehended, a conventional [awareness]  
Is not accepted [to be pramana]....*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, **a conventional** awareness, a memory, a subsequent cognizer, **it is not accepted** to be *pramana*, **since it** is a consciousness that through memory **apprehends** again an entity already **apprehended** and realized by a former *pramana* that induced [the subsequent cognizer] and has not deteriorated.

Our own system’s response is that a subsequent cognizer, such as a memory consciousness which is a conventional awareness, is not a valid cognizer because it is not ‘a knower that is *newly* non-deceptive’. It is not *newly* non-deceptive because it does not *newly* realize its object. A memory consciousness does not *newly* realize its object because through memory it realizes an entity, *i.e.*, an object that has already been realized by a former valid cognizer that induced the memory and has not deteriorated. The phrase “has not deteriorated” indicates that a subsequent cognizer such as a memory consciousness can only arise as long as the valid cognizer that induced the subsequent cognizer has not deteriorated but lies dormant.

A ‘conventional awareness’ refers to a conceptual consciousness. Therefore, a memory consciousness is described as a ‘conventional awareness’ because it is a conceptual consciousness. The literal meaning of the Sanskrit and Tibetan terms for ‘conventional’ is ‘concealer’. According to the Sautrantika tenet system (which, as mentioned before, is the tenet system on which the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is based), a concealer refers to a conceptual consciousness. A conceptual consciousness is a concealer because it does not apprehend its object directly but through the appearance of a generic image, and thus it ‘conceals’ the direct perception of its object.

Even though our own system does not explicitly explain here that ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is not asserted to be the definition of a valid cognizer, this is implied in the response.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who wrongly believes the definition of a valid cognizer to be ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’. He therefore argues that the definition is too broad, for it also includes awarenesses that are not valid cognizers, such as subsequent cognizers.

Our own system’s response is that a conventional awareness, such as a memory consciousness that is a subsequent cognizer (which satisfies the definition which the opponent wrongly believes to be the definition of a valid cognizer), is not accepted to be *pramana*, *i.e.*, a valid cognizer. It is not accepted to be a valid cognizer because it is a consciousness that through memory apprehends again an object that has already been apprehended by a former valid cognizer that induced the memory and has not deteriorated. (“*Since it apprehends the [already] apprehended, a conventional [awareness] / Is not accepted [to be pramana]*”).

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the definition of a valid cognizer according to our own system?
2. What is the definition of a valid cognizer according to the opponent of this outline?
3. What are subsequent cognizers?
4. What is the difference between a valid cognizer and a subsequent cognizer?
5. Why does the opponent believe that the definition of a valid cognizer is too broad?
6. How does our own system refute the opponent's claim that the definition of a valid cognizer is too broad?
7. What does it mean that a valid cognizer has not deteriorated but lies dormant?
8. What is a memory consciousness?
9. What is a conventional consciousness and why is it a concealer?

## THE INSTANCES [OF A *PRAMANA*]

[Someone:] Since one obtains an entity in dependence on the sense powers, such as the eye [sense powers], and so forth, are [the sense powers] not *pramana*?

The opponent's assertion here reflects the view of the followers of the Vaibhashika tenet school (the Great Exposition School) who hold that the sense powers, such as the eye sense power, the ear sense power, the nose sense power, etc., perceive phenomena. Therefore, according to this opponent, sense powers that enable a person to obtain an object are *pramana* (i.e., valid cognizers).

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*...an awareness is that very pramana,  
Because it is the main [cause] regarding the engaging in  
Things that are to be adopted and avoided and, (3)  
Because if there is that, there is this,  
Since on account of an object having different aspects,  
There are different realizations by the awarenesses.*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, **an awareness** that is newly non-deceptive by way of taking on the aspect of its object, it is **that very pramana**, because it is a consciousness which mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana* (i.e., valid cognition)

It achieves (a) indirect results through *pramana* **because it is the main cause regarding** a person's **engaging in** adopting and discarding **the things that are to be adopted and avoided**.

It (i.e., an awareness that is newly non-deceptive) achieves (b) direct results through *pramana*, **because if there is that** (*pramana* or valid cognizer), **there is this** ability to uninterruptedly posit [other] *pramana* (other valid cognizers) realizing their objects. This follows **since, on account of** [the] **different aspects of an object** which are taken on by awarenesses that are able to newly bar superimpositions, one is able to posit **different realizations** [of the different aspects] of the object **by the awarenesses**.

Our own system's response to the opponent's assertion is that *only* an awareness that is newly non-deceptive, by way of taking on the aspect of its object, is that very *pramana*, i.e., a valid cognizer, because it is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana* (i.e., valid cognition).

An awareness that is newly non-deceptive ‘takes on the aspect of its object’ because its object appears to it. For instance, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a car: it is ‘newly non-deceptive, by way of taking on the aspect of’ the car, since the car appears to the eye consciousness when the eye consciousness newly realizes the car.

Here, our own system not only refutes the Vaibhashika assertion that there are sense powers which are valid cognizers but—by mentioning the fact that a valid cognizer newly realizes its object ‘by way of taking on the aspect of its object’—also refutes another Vaibhashika assertion which is not held by any of the other Buddhist tenet systems. This assertion is that a sense consciousness does not take on the aspect of its object and that objects therefore do not appear to that awareness. Instead, followers of the Vaibhashika contend that a sense consciousness perceives its object nakedly, without taking on the aspect of the object.<sup>10</sup>

Followers of the other Buddhist tenet schools (Sautrantika, Chittamatra and Madhyamika) assert that even though an eye consciousness apprehending a car perceives the car directly without depending on the appearance of a generic image of the car, the eye consciousness does not perceive the car nakedly. It does not perceive the car nakedly since the eye consciousness takes on the aspect of the car, *i.e.*, the car appears to the eye consciousness.

Returning to the reason cited by our own system why only an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of the object) is a valid cognizer: only such an awareness is a valid cognizer because it is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana* (*i.e.*, valid cognition).

A newly non-deceptive awareness is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect results through valid cognition, because a valid cognizer is the main cause of avoiding that which is to be discarded and embracing that which is to be adopted. In other words, it is mainly in reliance on correct understanding that we are able to accomplish both worldly goals (*e.g.*, a good job) and spiritual goals (*e.g.*, high rebirths and definite good), and avoid whatever may be in the way of achieving those goals. Having an incorrect understanding, on the other hand, is one of the main obstacles preventing us from accomplishing our aims.

A newly non-deceptive awareness is a consciousness that mainly achieves (b) direct results through valid cognition, because a valid cognizer may directly or “uninterruptedly” induce a series of other valid cognizers that enable a person to get a fuller understanding of an object. A valid cognizer may induce a series of other valid cognizers since any object possesses different aspects or characteristics (*e.g.*, its impermanence, its effect on other phenomena) which, following upon a general comprehension of the object, may lead to the successive realization of those various characteristics.

On the other hand, if one misperceives an object, such a misperception is likely to give rise to further misperceptions. Hence, if instead of a valid cognizer, one generates a wrong consciousness, such a wrong consciousness may induce a series of other wrong consciousnesses.

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<sup>10</sup>Please see, Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkins’s *Cutting Through Appearances* (which contains an annotated translation of Koenchog Jigme Wangpo’s *Precious Garland of Tenets*) [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p. 199.

Also, Jeffrey Hopkins’ *Maps of the Profound: Jam-yang-shay-ba’s Great Exposition of Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Views of the Nature of Reality* (a translation of root text with commentaries) [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 237:

“Jam-yang-shay-ba’s *Great Exposition of Tenets*: They assert that sense consciousnesses actually apprehend objects nakedly without [the object casting a representation or] aspect [of itself to the consciousness]. Sense consciousnesses are specified in order to eliminate the likes of conceptual consciousnesses [which operate through the medium of an image]. “Without the aspect” and “actually” are specified in consideration that they do not assert, as the Proponents of Sutra do, that a representation intervenes. Even minute particles are actually known.”



Here, the word “uninterruptedly” means that a valid cognizer may induce a series of valid cognizers without the inducing valid cognizer and the series of valid cognizers (that are induced) being “interrupted” by an awareness that is unrelated to the realization of that valid cognizer. In other words, the series of different valid cognizers arises uninterruptedly soon after the inducing valid cognizer.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who, like the proponents of the Vaibhashika School, asserts that whatever is a valid cognizer is not necessarily an awareness, for there are sense powers that are valid cognizers.

Our own system’s response is that only an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of its object) is that very *pramana* because it is a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect and (b) direct results through *pramana*. (“... an awareness is that very *pramana*”).

An awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of its object) mainly achieves (a) indirect results through *pramana*, because it is the main cause of a person’s engaging in adopting and avoiding the things that are to be adopted and avoided. (“Because it is the main [cause] regarding the engaging in / Things that are to be adopted and avoided, ...”).

Also, an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of its object) mainly achieves (b) direct results through *pramana*, because if there is that valid cognition, there is an ability to directly or uninterruptedly induce other *pramana*. This is because the different aspects or characteristics of an object (which are taken on by awarenesses that can newly realize their objects) enable one to posit different realizations — by those awarenesses — of the object’s different aspects. (“Because if there is that, there is this, / Since on account of an object having different aspects, / There are different realizations by the awarenesses.”)

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the assertion of the opponent (of this outline)?
2. What is our own system’s response to the opponent’s assertion?
3. Which two assertions unique to the Vaibhashika (Great Exposition School) are refuted here?
4. What does it mean for an awareness “to take on the aspect of its object”?
5. What is the reason cited by our own system, why only an awareness that is newly non-deceptive (by way of taking on the aspect of the object) is a valid cognizer?
6. Why is a valid cognizer a consciousness that mainly achieves (a) indirect results through *pramana*?
7. Why is a valid cognizer a consciousness that mainly achieves (b) direct results through *pramana*?
8. What is the meaning of the word “uninterruptedly” here?

## ASCERTAINING THAT THE INSTANCES [SATISFY] THE DEFINITION

[Someone:]The definition of *pramana*—being newly non-deceptive— is ascertained either by (a) [each *pramana*, i.e., valid cognizer] itself or (b) in dependence on another, subsequent [*pramana*]. In the first case (a), it follows that there will be no one who is confused about the distinction between *pramana* and non-*pramana*. In the second case (b), it follows that the ascertaining *pramana* will also require ascertainment as [being] non-deceptive by another, subsequent [*pramana*], and since that [*pramana*] will depend on yet another, there will be an infinite regress.

In the context of examining how one can come to know that a valid cognizer (arising in one's mental continuum) satisfies the definition of valid cognizer, and thus in the context of examining which awareness realizes that a valid cognizer is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' the opponent above sees only two possibilities: either (a) every valid cognizer itself ascertains or realizes that it is newly non-deceptive or (b) one requires a later valid cognizer to realize this. In other words, either (a) the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, for instance, (besides realizing blue) realizes that it is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive', or (b) one requires another valid cognizer arising after the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue to realize that the first moment of the eye consciousness was newly non-deceptive.

According to the opponent, if (a) every valid cognizer (besides realizing its main object) were to realize that it itself is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' it would absurdly follow that there was no one who was unclear about whether his awareness was a valid cognizer or not. Therefore, one would not have to listen, contemplate, and meditate on the scriptures in order to comprehend valid cognizers.

If (b) one were to require a subsequent valid cognizer to realize that the former valid cognizer was newly non-deceptive, it would absurdly follow that the subsequent valid cognizer also required the realization that it was newly non-deceptive by another subsequent valid cognizer, and since that later valid cognizer would depend on yet another valid cognizer, there would be infinite regress.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Realizing its own nature by itself, (5)*

*[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention.*

[Response by Dharmottara:] It is not the case that all *pramana* (i.e., valid cognizers) are necessarily either [exclusively] ascertained by themselves or [exclusively ascertained] by another [subsequent *pramana*], because there is *pramana* that is ascertained **by itself**, and [*pramana*] that is ascertained by another [subsequent *pramana*]. This is so, because one observes that [some] self-experiencing self-knowing direct perceiver *pramana* (i.e., self-knowing valid cognizers) when **realizing their own nature** induce ascertainment of the factor of non-deceptiveness that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with themselves; and because one observes that some *pramana* when realizing their object of comprehension require ascertainment as non-deceptive **pramanathrough** *pramana* of **verbal convention** that arises later.

Here Gyaltsab Je cites three different interpretations as to the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*: "*Realizing its own nature by itself* / *[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*". These two lines are the response to the opponent's assertion.

The three interpretations are by three different Indian masters of *Pramana*: (a) Dharmottara, (b) Prajnakaragupta, and (c) Devendrabodhi. According to those masters, the two lines present two types of valid cognizer: (1) *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* and (2) *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* — with the first line describing *self-*

*ascertainment valid cognizers* and the second line *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*. However, the three masters differ with regard to how they describe the two types of valid cognizer.

The first interpretation of the two lines is by Dharmottara (*slob dpon chos mchog*). Dharmottara interprets Dharmakirti's response as follows: Not all valid cognizers are realized to be 'knowers that are newly non-deceptive' either exclusively by themselves or exclusively by another subsequent valid cognizer. This is because there are *some* valid cognizers that are realized to be 'newly non-deceptive' by themselves and *some* that are realized by other subsequent valid cognizers. (Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*: "It is not the case that all *pramana* are necessarily either [exclusively] ascertained by themselves or [exclusively ascertained] by another [subsequent *pramana*], because there is *pramana* that is ascertained **by itself**, and [*pramana*] that is ascertained by another [subsequent *pramana*].")

An example of a valid cognizer that is realized to be a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive' by itself is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue. Yet this does not literally mean that the eye consciousness itself (besides realizing blue) realizes that it is a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive'. Instead, its self-knower — the self-knower perceiving the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue (which is of one nature with the eye consciousness) — realizes this.

The self-knower perceiving the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains (*i.e.*, realizes) the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue. Not only does it ascertain the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, it also ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a valid cognizer. Since the self-knower ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a valid cognizer, it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive'; and since the self-knower ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive', the self-knower ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue *is* non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' *final object of comprehension*, blue. A consciousness' *final object of comprehension* (or literally: "the final entity of an object of comprehension", *gzhal bya'i bdag nyid mthar thug pa*) is explained below.

As mentioned before, a self-knower is a mental consciousness that directly perceives an awareness that is of one substantial entity or one nature with itself. This is because every awareness consists of two parts: one part that is *directed outwards* (*e.g.*, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue) and apprehends phenomena such as shapes, colors, sounds, etc., while the other part is *directed inwards* (*e.g.*, the self-knower perceiving the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue) and perceives the awareness that is *directed outwards*.

Therefore, when Dharmottara says that some valid cognizers are ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' *by themselves* ("there is *pramana* that is ascertained **by itself**"), he does not literally mean that those valid cognizers (besides realizing their main object) also realize that they are 'newly non-deceptive'. Instead he means that those valid cognizers are ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to their *final object of comprehension* by *themselves-knowers*.

In others words, since the self-knowers of some valid cognizers ascertain that those valid cognizers are 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to the valid cognizers' *final objects of comprehension*, Dharmottara says that those valid cognizers are ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' *by themselves*. Here the phrase "ascertained by themselves" means *ascertained by their self-knowers which are of one nature with themselves*.

Taking the example of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is ascertained to be 'newly non-

deceptive' by itself, because it is ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to the eye consciousness's *final object of comprehension* (blue) by its self-knowing valid cognizer realizing the self-knower's own nature, *i.e.*, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue. In other words, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is ascertained to be 'newly non-deceptive' by itself, because it is ascertained by its self-knowing valid cognizer which besides ascertaining the self-knower's own nature, *i.e.*, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, also ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is 'newly non-deceptive' with regard to the eye consciousness's *final object of comprehension*, blue. (Please note that if an awareness is a valid cognizer, its self-knower is necessarily also a valid cognizer — a 'self-knowing valid cognizer').

Thus, the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue; it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer; it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is a 'knower that is newly non-deceptive'; and it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue is newly non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousnesses' *final object of comprehension*, blue.

However, not every valid cognizer is ascertained to be newly non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* by its self-knower, because not every valid cognizer is newly non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*. Not every valid cognizer is newly non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* because not every valid cognizer realizes its *final object of comprehension*.

This is because, as mentioned above, there are two types of valid cognizer:

Self-ascertainment valid cognizer (according to Dharmottara's interpretation, also called 'valid cognizer which induces ascertainment by itself', *rang las nges kyi tshad ma*);

Other-ascertainment valid cognizer (according to Dharmottara's interpretation, also called 'valid cognizer when ascertainment is induced by another', *gzhan las nges kyi tshad ma*).

An example of an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar, with the red color being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not.

Another example is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a tree from afar, with the tree being a juniper tree and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that tree is a juniper tree or not.

The first example, the eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red from afar, is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* because, even though it is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' with regard to the color red, it is not non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*, the color of fire, and thus with regard to 'the color red being the color of fire'. (Please note that 'the color red being the color of fire' is also that eye consciousness' *final object of comprehension*.)

The eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the color red because it realizes the color red. However, it is not non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* because it does not realize the color of fire nor that 'the color red is the color of fire'. It does not realize the color of fire nor that 'the color red is the color of fire' because the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness arises is far away from the fire and thus has doubts whether the color red is the color of fire or not.

The color of fire as well as 'the color red being the color of fire' are the *final objects of comprehension* of that eye consciousness because the eye consciousness *has the ability* to realize that the color red is the color of fire and because here the color red (perceived by the eye consciousness) and the color of fire (appearing to the eye consciousness) are

equivalent, and equally easily realized. The only reason the eye consciousness does not realize the color of fire, and thus that ‘the color red is the color of fire’, is that the fire is far away from the observer, resulting in the (observer’s) uncertainty as to whether the color red is the color of fire or not.

The first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the color red from afar (with the color red being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* because — simply put — it is unable to induce ascertainment of the color of fire through its own power, and therefore of the fact that here, the color red is the color of fire. This means that the eye consciousness is unable to induce, through its own power, a subsequent conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and that the color red is the color of fire.

Instead, it requires another valid cognizer of *verbal convention* which arises later and is able to induce, through its own power, a subsequent conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and that the color red is the color of fire. An example of such a valid cognizer of verbal convention is the first moment of an eye consciousness (in the continuum of a person who has moved closer to the fire) realizing the color of fire and thus that the color red here is the color of fire. Since such an eye consciousness realizes its *final object of comprehension* (and is therefore a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer*), it is able to induce, through its own power, a subsequent conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and thus that the color red here is the color of fire.

The later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire is called “a valid cognizer of verbal convention” because it induces a conceptual consciousness that is able to link the color red (appearing to the eye consciousness) with the verbal convention of the color of fire, *i.e.*, it is able to link the red color (appearing to the eye consciousness) with the term “color of fire”.

In other words, the later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire induces a conceptual consciousness which — besides ascertaining the color of fire, and that the color red (appearing to the eye consciousness) is the color of fire — is also able to label that red color with the term “color of fire”.

Please note that *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are necessarily sense consciousnesses. There are no *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* that are mental consciousnesses. Hence, self-knowing valid cognizers, inferential valid cognizers, yogic direct perceiving valid cognizers, etc. are all *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*.

Examples of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent, the first moment of a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness, and so forth.

The first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color of fire is a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* because — simply put — it itself is able to induce, through its own power, ascertainment of its *final object of comprehension*, the color of fire, and thus of the fact that the red color is the color of fire. This means that it is able to induce, through its own power, a conceptual consciousness ascertaining the color of fire and that the red color is the color of fire.

Likewise, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing that the physical body is impermanent, and the first moment of a yogic direct perceiver realizing selflessness are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they are able to induce, through their own power, ascertainment of their *final objects of comprehension* without relying on another valid cognizer to induce such an ascertainment.

Returning to Dharmottara's interpretation of the *Pramanavarttika*'s two lines, "*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*": even though according to Dharmottara, the two lines expound on the two types of valid cognizer, Dharmottara holds that the two lines explain the two types of valid cognizers by way of describing the self-knowers of those valid cognizers.

The words of Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* expressing Dharmottara's interpretation of the first line ("*Realizing its own nature by itself*") which presents *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are: "[some] self-experiencing self-knowing direct perceiver *pramana* (i.e., self-knowing valid cognizers) when **realizing their own nature** induce an ascertainment of the factor of non-deceptiveness that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with themselves".

The meaning of these words is that some self-knowing valid cognizers, i.e. the self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*, realize their own nature because they realize the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* that are simultaneous and of one nature with those self-knowers ("[Some] self-experiencing self-knowing direct perceiver *pramana* (i.e., self-knowing valid cognizers) when **realizing their own nature**").

Not only do those self-knowers realize the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers), they also realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* that is simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers. Since the self-knowers realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*, they realize that the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*.

For instance, the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color of fire ascertains not only the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, it also ascertains the factor of non-deceptiveness of that eye consciousness. Since the self-knower ascertains the factor of non-deceptiveness of the eye consciousness, it ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' *final object of comprehension*, the color of fire (and that the color of the fire is the color of fire).

On the other hand, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* do not ascertain that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers) are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers' final objects of comprehension*.

The words of Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* expressing Dharmottara's interpretation of the second line ("*[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*") which presents *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are: "some *pramana* realizing their object of comprehension require ascertainment as non-deceptive **pramanathrough** a *pramana* of **verbal convention** that arises later".

The meaning of these words is that some valid cognizers, i.e. the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, realize their objects of comprehension ("some *pramana* realizing their object of comprehension") but do not realize that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers' final objects of comprehension*.

The self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize their objects of comprehension because they realize the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) and that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are non-

deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers'* objects of comprehension.

Furthermore, both the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers) and the fact that 'those self-knowers are non-deceptive with regard to their objects of comprehension' are the *final objects of comprehension* of those self-knowers, which is why the self-knowers are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*.

However, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* do not realize that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers'* *final objects of comprehension*. The self-knowers do not realize this because the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) are not non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*. The *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one substantial entity with the self-knowers) are not non-deceptive with regard to their final objects of comprehension because they do not realize their *final objects of comprehension*.

As mentioned above, an example of an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar, with the red color here being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not. The self-knower of that eye consciousness realizes its object of comprehension because it realizes the eye consciousness (that is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) as well as the fact that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' object of comprehension, the color red.

However, the self-knower of that eye consciousness does not realize that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension* (the color of fire and the fact that the color red here is the color of fire). The self-knower does not realize such because the eye consciousness is not non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*. It is not non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension because it is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer*.

Hence, the person in whose continuum the self-knower of an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* arises does not know that the color he perceives is actually the color of fire. Therefore, he requires a further self-knowing valid cognizer to ascertain that he perceives the color of fire.

This means that the person who has in his continuum, for instance, a self-knower perceiving the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing the color red from afar (with the red color here being the color of fire and the eye consciousness arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) requires a later self-knower valid cognizer in order to be able to ascertain that what he is looking at is actually the color of fire. That self-knower valid cognizer is the self-knower of a later eye consciousness newly realizing the color of fire (and arising after the person has moved closer to the fire), and thus it ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' *final object of comprehension* (i.e., the color of fire and that the color red here is the color of fire).

Furthermore, the later self-knower valid cognizer ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire (that is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness' final object of comprehension *in dependence on a valid cognizer of verbal convention*. The later self-knower valid cognizer ascertains that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension *in dependence on a valid cognizer of verbal convention* because the later self-knowing valid cognizer ascertains that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with

regard to its final object of comprehension in dependence on the eye consciousness realizing the color of fire and because, as mentioned above, that eye consciousness is a valid cognizer of verbal convention.

Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation* that, “some *pramana* require ascertainment as non-deceptive ***pramana* through a *pramana* of verbal convention** that arises later”.

Here, the phrase “through a *pramana* of verbal convention” means *in dependence on* a valid cognizer of verbal convention. Thus, in short, some *pramana*, *i.e.*, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, require self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that arise later and are able to provide further ascertainment) since the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are unable to ascertain that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to those valid cognizers’ *final objects of comprehension*.

For instance, the self-knower of an *other-ascertainment* eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red from afar requires another self-knower (that arises later and is able to provide further ascertainment), because the self-knower of the *other-ascertainment* eye consciousness does not ascertain that the eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness’ *final object of comprehension*.

Hence, the self-knower of the *other-ascertainment* eye consciousness realizing the color red from afar requires the self-knower of a later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, because it is only the self-knower of the later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire that is able to ascertain that the later eye consciousness is non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness’ *final object of comprehension*.

Since the self-knower of the later eye consciousness ascertains this non-deceptiveness *in dependence on* the later eye consciousness realizing the color of fire, which (as explained above) is a valid cognizer of verbal convention, the ascertainment of the eye consciousness being non-deceptive with regard to the eye consciousness’ final object of comprehension takes place *in dependence on* or *through* a valid cognizer of verbal convention.

This completes the interpretation by Dharmottara.

[Response by Prajnakaragupta:] Alternatively, from the perspective of a knowing consciousness that investigates the ultimate, there is no distinction between *pramana* and *non-pramana* because from the perspective [of that knowing consciousness] one **realizes** that there is only the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities, the non-dual experience experiencing **its own nature by itself**. [Yet even] if from the perspective of that [knowing consciousness investigating the ultimate] there is no [distinction between *pramana* and *non-pramana*], this does not mean it would be unacceptable for there to be such a distinction, because a *pramana* of **verbal convention** that functions without investigating [the ultimate] establishes a distinction between ***pramana*** and *non-pramana*.

[Some] assert that the first passage (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”) indicates that a self-knower establishes the factor of experiencing its own nature (*i.e.*, it establishes the awareness that is of one nature with the self-knower), and that the latter passage (“[*Realizing*] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) indicates that a subsequent *pramana* — having the appearance of the functions [of its object] — establishes [that the former awareness was] *pramana* with regard to its object of comprehension. [However] these are not the complete definitions of self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment.

The second interpretation of the meaning of the two lines of the *Pramanavarttika* (“*Realizing its own nature by itself* / [*Realizing*] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) is by the Indian master Prajnakaragupta (*rgyan mkhan po*).



According to Prajnakaragupta, *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*, as described in the first line (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”), are valid cognizers directly realizing ultimate truths, *i.e.*, emptiness.

Please note that although the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is generally taught from the point of view of the Buddhist philosophical system of the Sautrantika (Sutra School), Prajnakaragupta’s explanation is from the point of view of the Chittamatra (Mind-Only School).

Proponents of the Chittamatra School assert that phenomena do not exist externally; they are of one nature or one substantial entity with the mind and appear to it owing to the activation of mental imprints. Therefore, the physical world and its shapes, colours, sounds, and so forth, merely *appear* to an awareness without existing in the manner of external phenomena.

This does not mean that physical phenomena *are* mind, because minds are observers of objects, and if physical phenomena were minds, stones and so forth would absurdly have objects of perception. Rather, just as a dream object is not the dream consciousness that perceives it, nor is it of a different nature or different substantial entity than the dream consciousness, similarly, the physical objects of the world are not the sense consciousnesses that perceive them, nor are they of a different nature than those sense consciousnesses.

The reason why sights, sounds, smells, etc., appear to the mind is that an imprint, previously left on the mental continuum of the person, has been activated and simultaneously produces both the appearance of an object and a cognizing mind – much as in a dream. The cognizing mind in turn leaves a *new* imprint which will be responsible for the appearance of another object and the manifestation of another cognizing mind at some time in the future.

Hence, the reason why we perceive shapes, colours, and so forth, is not because objects exist outside the mind, but because we have left – and continue to leave – countless imprints on our mind-stream: once activated, they are responsible for our different experiences. Only Buddhas have no imprints anymore; they perceive objects the way they are because they have overcome all obstructions and shortcomings of the mind.

The fact that the subject (the mind) and its object are produced simultaneously by one imprint accounts for their being of one substantial entity.

Therefore, according to the Chittamatra School, ultimate truth or emptiness refers to *the lack* of subject and object being different substantial entities (*i.e.*, it refers to subject and object *not* being different substantial entities). In other words, ultimate truth or emptiness refers to the lack of a mind (subject) and its object being different substantial entities. For instance, the lack of an eye consciousness and a table (that is perceived by that eye consciousness) being different substantial entities is an ultimate truth, *i.e.*, emptiness.

A valid cognizer directly realizing ultimate truth, or emptiness, refers to a meditative equipoise that is the product of intensive and prolonged meditation, and which directly realizes the ultimate truth or emptiness of *all* phenomena. It is a non-dual consciousness that is single-pointedly absorbed in ultimate truth, with nothing other than emptiness appearing to it.

Since such a valid cognizer directly realizes the ultimate truth of *all* phenomena, it also realizes its own ultimate nature, *i.e.*, its own ultimate truth. Furthermore, since it is a knowing consciousness that investigates only the ultimate (*i.e.*, it realizes only *the lack* of subject and object being different substantial entities), it is unable to determine whether an awareness is a valid cognizer or not.

This is why Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, “from the perspective of a knowing consciousness that investigates the ultimate, there

is no distinction between *pramana* and *non-pramana* because, from the perspective [of that knowing consciousness], one **realizes** that there is only the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities, the non-dual experience experiencing **its own nature by itself.**"

According to Prajnakaragupta, valid cognizers directly realizing ultimate truth are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they directly realize their own ultimate nature. As mentioned above, they realize their own ultimate nature because they directly realize the ultimate nature or ultimate truth of *all* phenomena. Hence, Prajnakaragupta asserts that *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are valid cognizers that realize their own ultimate nature.

However, since *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize only ultimate truths, they do not perceive any conventional truths; and since they do not perceive any conventional truths, they are not able to determine whether an awareness is a valid cognizer or not.

But this does not mean that there are no valid cognizers that are able to distinguish between an awareness that is a valid cognizer and an awareness that is not a valid cognizer. There are valid cognizers which can make such distinctions because there are *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*.

According to Prajnakaragupta, *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*— described in the second line ("[Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention") — refer to conventional valid cognizers. Conventional valid cognizers are awarenesses which are newly non-deceptive with regard to phenomena that are conventional truths, *i.e.*, they newly realize phenomena that are conventional truths. According to the Chittamatra School, conventional truths refer to all phenomena that are not emptiness, such as vase, pillar, consciousness, and so forth.

Examples of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are sense direct perceiver valid cognizers, such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a chair, an inferential valid cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass, a yogic direct perceiver valid cognizer realizing impermanence, and so forth. They are *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they realize or ascertain phenomena other than emptiness.

In Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, the words that express Prajnakaragupta's interpretation of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are, "[Yet even] if from the perspective of that [knowing consciousness investigating the ultimate] there is no [distinction between *pramana* and *non-pramana*], this does not mean it would be unacceptable for there to be such a distinction, because *apramana* of **verbal convention** that functions without investigating [the ultimate] establishes a distinction between ***pramana*** and *non-pramana*.

In other words, even though a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* directly realizing emptiness is unable to distinguish between an awareness that is a valid cognizer and an awareness that is not a valid cognizer, this does not mean that such a distinction does not exist. Such a distinction exists because a conventional valid cognizer (*i.e.*, an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer* or valid cognizer of verbal convention) is able to distinguish between the two.

Having presented Prajnakaragupta's interpretation of the meaning of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* and *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, Gyaltsab Je then cites Prajnakaragupta's refutation of the interpretation of the two types of valid cognizers (and thus of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*) given by some other scholars:

According to these scholars, *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*— described in the first line ("Realizing its own nature by itself")— refer to the self-knowers of valid

cognizers. These self-knowers are *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* because they ascertain that the valid cognizers (which are of one nature with the self-knowers) are awarenesses that apprehend their objects. For instance, the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains that the eye consciousness is an awareness apprehending blue.

*Other-ascertainment valid cognizers*— described in the second line (“[Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”)— refer to valid cognizers that arise after the earlier self-knowers of valid cognizers and realize that the awarenesses (previously realized by the self-knowers) were *valid cognizers* with regard to their objects of comprehension. In the case of the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue, subsequent to that self-knower arises another valid cognizer which ascertains that the eye consciousness realizing blue was a valid cognizer with regard to its object of comprehension, blue. This means that unlike the self-knower, the subsequent valid cognizer does not merely ascertain that the eye consciousness was an awareness perceiving blue, it ascertains that the eye consciousness was a *valid cognizer realizing* blue. According to these scholars, that subsequent valid cognizer is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer*.

However, Prajnakaragupta holds that this explanation is not correct, for it does not correctly define the two types of valid cognizers.

The words of Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* expressing Prajnakaragupta’s refutation are, “[Some] assert that the first passage (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”) indicates that a self-knower establishes the factor of experiencing its own nature (*i.e.*, it establishes the awareness that is of one nature with the self-knower), and that the latter passage (“[Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) indicates that a subsequent *pramana* — having the appearance of the functions [of its object] — establishes [that the former awareness was] *pramana* with regard to its object of comprehension. [However] these are not the complete definitions of self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment.”

This completes the interpretation by Prajnakaragupta.

Alternatively, one can apply the explanation by Acharya Devendrabodhi: Even though the mere existence of an awareness such as a direct perceiver apprehending blue is **realized by** its **self**-knowing direct perceiver, it follows that there is no certainty as to [that self-knowing direct perceiver] realizing the factor of being *pramana* that is simultaneous with and of one substantial entity with [the self-knowing direct perceiver], because [in some cases] one observes that the ***pramana*** factor must be realized by a later *pramana* of **verbal convention** — having the appearance of the functions [of its object].

The third interpretation of the meaning of the two lines of the *Pramanavarttika* (“*Realizing its own nature by itself* / [Realizing] the very *pramana* through verbal convention”) is by the Indian master Devendrabodhi (*lha dbang blo*).

According to Devendrabodhi, the self-knower of a valid cognizer ascertains that the valid cognizer (that is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is an awareness apprehending its object. However, it is not certain whether the self-knower also ascertains that the valid cognizer is ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

For instance, the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue ascertains an eye consciousness apprehending blue. But the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness does not necessarily ascertain that the eye consciousness is a valid cognizer and thus ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

A self-knower is unable to ascertain this when the person in whose continuum the eye consciousness and its self-knower arise holds the wrong view that there are no valid

cognizers that are newly non-deceptive with regard to their object. Holding such a wrong view hinders the self-knower from fully ascertaining its object, *i.e.*, it prevents the self-knower from realizing that the eye consciousness is in fact a valid cognizer.

According to Devendrabodhi, a self-knower that is able to ascertain that the valid cognizer (which is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' is a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer*— described in the first line ("*Realizing its own nature by itself*"). Therefore, the self-knower of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue which ascertains that the first moment of the eye consciousness is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' is asserted to be a *self-ascertainment valid cognizer*.

If a self-knower is unable to ascertain that the valid cognizer (which is simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knower) is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive', a subsequent valid cognizer is needed to ascertain this. Such a subsequent valid cognizer of verbal convention (ascertaining that the valid cognizer previously apprehended by the self-knower was 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive') is an *other-ascertainment valid cognizer*— described in the second line ("*[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*").

This completes the interpretation by Devendrabodhi.

Next follows an extensive examination of the two types of valid cognizers by an opponent:

[Someone:] What are "self-ascertainment" and "other-ascertainment" [valid cognizers]? Of the two, (a) object and (b) consciousness, [self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers]: Either [they] refer to [valid cognizers] inducing or not inducing ascertainment of (a) *an object* through their own power. Or [they refer to valid cognizers] inducing or not inducing ascertainment] of (b) *an object-possessor* (*i.e.*, a consciousness) [through their own power].

Here the opponent examines what self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers refer to. According to him, the two types of valid cognizers pertain either to the ascertainment of (a) *an object* (*i.e.*, an object other than a consciousness), or the ascertainment of (b) *a consciousness* — with consciousness here mainly referring to a *valid cognizer*.

If self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that induces ascertainment of *an object* through its own power, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that does not induce ascertainment of *an object* through its own power.

Alternatively, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (b) *a consciousness* (*i.e.*, a valid cognizer), a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that induces ascertainment of a *valid cognizer* through its own power, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be an awareness that does not induce ascertainment of a *valid cognizer* through its own power.

Please note that an awareness that realizes something also induces ascertainment of that thing through its own power. Such an awareness induces ascertainment of the thing through its own power since it is able to induce a subsequent conceptual consciousness that ascertains or realizes the same thing. For instance, the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a table induces ascertainment of the table through its own power because, through its own power, it induces a subsequent conceptual consciousness that also realizes the table.

If it were the first (an object), it would follow that the later *pramana* ascertaining [its object] would be a subsequent cognizer. Also, if the earlier *pramana* were not able to induce ascertainment of any of its objects through its own power, it could only be a doubting consciousness. If that were the case, it would not be suitable to be *pramana* because it would not overcome the slightest qualm.

The opponent argues that if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*, “the later *pramana*” (*i.e.*, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer) would be a subsequent cognizer. Furthermore, if “the earlier *pramana*” (*i.e.*, an other-ascertainment valid cognizer) were not able to induce ascertainment of any of its objects through its own power, it would absurdly be a doubting consciousness, because, like a doubting consciousness, it would be unable to overcome the slightest qualm. (Later and earlier *pramana* are explained below.)

The reasoning that leads the opponent to these conclusions is as follows: according to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be defined as ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be defined as ‘a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of its object through its own power’.

If a self-ascertainment valid cognizer were to be defined as ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’, it would follow that an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would be a *self-ascertainment* valid cognizer. For instance, the first moment an eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar (with the red color being the color of fire and the valid cognizer arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) would be a self-ascertainment valid cognizer because it satisfies the opponent’s definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer. It satisfies the opponent’s definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer because it is ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’. The first moment of that eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red is ‘a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of its object through its own power’ because it is a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment of the radiant color red through its own power.

The opponent then argues that if the first moment the eye consciousness realizing a radiant color red from afar (with the red color being the color of fire and the valid cognizer arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) were a self-ascertainment valid cognizer, it would be able to induce ascertainment of its *final object of comprehension* through its own power. If the first moment of that eye consciousness were able to induce ascertainment of its final object of comprehension through its own power, it would realize its final object of comprehension, *i.e.*, it would realize that the radiant color red is the color of fire.

If that eye consciousness were to realize that the color red is the color of fire, the later self-ascertainment valid cognizer realizing the color of fire would be a *subsequent cognizer*. The later self-ascertainment valid cognizer would be a subsequent cognizer, because the later self-ascertainment valid cognizer here refers to the first moment of an eye consciousness (in the continuum of the person who has moved closer to the fire) realizing the color of fire and thus that the color red here is the color of fire.

In other words, if the earlier other-ascertainment valid cognizer realizing the radiant color red from afar were able to realize that the red color is the color of fire, the later self-ascertainment valid cognizer realizing the color of fire would be a subsequent cognizer, because that later self-ascertainment valid cognizer has been induced by the earlier other-ascertainment valid cognizer and because the later cognizer realized what had already been realized, *i.e.*, that the color red here is the color of fire.

This is why Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, “it would follow that the later *pramana* ascertaining [its object] would be a subsequent cognizer”.

The opponent then argues that since the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red (with the red color being the color of fire and the valid cognizer arising in the continuum of a person who has doubts whether that color is the color of fire or not) is not a self-ascertainment valid cognizer, but an other-ascertainment valid cognizer, it cannot possibly satisfy the opponent’s definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer.

If the eye consciousness were not to satisfy the opponent’s definition of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer, it would not induce ascertainment of its object through its own power. If the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing the radiant color red from afar were not able to induce ascertainment of its object through its own power, it would not *realize* any of its objects. If it were not to realize any of its objects, it could only be a doubting consciousness, for, like a doubting consciousness, it would be unable to overcome any qualms or wrong views with regard to its object. If that eye consciousness were a doubting consciousness, it would not be a valid cognizer, and thus not an other-ascertainment valid cognizer.

Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, “Also, if the former *pramana* were not able to induce ascertainment of any of its objects through its own power, it would only be a doubting consciousness. If that were the case, it would not be suitable to be *pramana* because it could not overcome the slightest qualm.

This completes the section on the opponent examining self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers pertaining to the ascertainment of (a) *an object*.

Object-possessors are ascertained to be threefold: (1) definition, (2) definiendum, and (3) instance.

The opponent then examines whether the two types of valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *a consciousness*, i.e., a valid cognizer. The way the opponent examines whether self-ascertainment and other ascertainment valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of a valid cognizer — an object-possessor — is by investigating that object-possessing valid cognizer from the perspective of the following three aspects: (1) definition, (2) definiendum, and (3) instance.

Here *definition* refers to the definition of a valid cognizer, *definiendum* to the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, and *instance* to an instance of a valid cognizer.

The opponent first examines (3) an instance of a valid cognizer:

It is not plausible to distinguish [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] being able or not being able to ascertain through their own power (3) an instance of *pramana*, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue. This is because it is impossible for a consciousness directed outwards, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue, to realize itself. Also, [an awareness] is not suitable to be *pramana* if it is not realized by a self-knowing direct perceiver through [that self-knowing direct perceiver’s] own power, which experiences [the *pramana*] just because [the *pramana*] is there.

According to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (a) *a consciousness* — and in this case, to the ascertainment of an instance of a valid cognizer, such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, then a self-ascertainment valid cognizer (taking the

example of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) would refer to 'a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue', and an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue'.

Furthermore, the opponent holds that those self-ascertainment or other-ascertainment valid cognizers (that induce or do not induce ascertainment through their own power of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) could refer to only two kinds of valid cognizer: they would refer either to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue or to the self-knower of such an eye consciousness.

If the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that induces ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue', while the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue'.

In other words, if the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that realizes itself, and the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not realize itself.

However, the opponent argues that an eye consciousness realizing blue that also realizes itself is not plausible, since an eye consciousness is an awareness that is directed outwards (*i.e.*, perceives objects of the external world) and thus could not realize itself.

This is expressed in Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* with the words, "It is not plausible to distinguish [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] being able or not being able to ascertain through their own power (3) an instance of *pramana*, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue. This is because it is impossible for a consciousness directed outwards, such as [the first moment of an eye consciousness] apprehending blue, to realize itself.

On the other hand, if the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that induces ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue', while the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue'.

In other words, if the two types of valid cognizers were to refer to the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue, the self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that ascertains the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue', while the other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to 'the *self-knower* of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not ascertain the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue'.

However, the opponent disputes the existence of a self-knower of the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue that does not ascertain or realize that eye consciousness realizing blue, for he argues that by reason of the fact that the first

moment of that eye consciousness is a valid cognizer, it must have a self-knower that realizes the eye consciousness. Otherwise, the opponent argues, the first moment of the eye consciousness realizing blue would not qualify as a valid cognizer.

This is expressed by Gyaltsab Je says when he says, “Also, [an awareness] is not suitable to be *pramana* if it is not realized by a self-knowing direct perceiver through [that self-knowing direct perceiver’s] own power, which experiences [the *pramana*] just because [the *pramana*] is there.”

Then, the opponent examines whether self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ (with *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ referring to *pramana* or *valid cognizer* itself):

Furthermore, it is not reasonable to differentiate [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] ascertaining or not ascertaining through their own power (2) *the definiendum* — the verbal convention of *pramana* — based on an instance. This is because it would follow that inferential [valid] cognizers in the continuum of children who do not know the verbal convention of *pramana*, or in the continuum Charvakas would not be self-ascertainment [valid cognizers].

According to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment through its own power of the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment through its own power of the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

In other words, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that realizes the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not realize the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

This would mean that a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would realize the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ *based on an instance of a valid cognizer*, such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue. To realize the definiendum of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ based on the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue means to realize that the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue *is* a valid cognizer.

Please note that a person who is able to realize that an instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer must know the verbal convention of a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, he must know the term “valid cognizer”.

Therefore, according to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (2) *the definiendum* of ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to an awareness that realizes that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to an awareness that does not realize that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer.

However, the opponent holds that this is not reasonable, which is expressed as follows in Gyaltsab Je’s ***Elucidation of the Path to Liberation***: “Furthermore, it is not reasonable to differentiate [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] ascertaining or not ascertaining through their own power (2) *the definiendum* — the verbal convention of *pramana* — based on an instance”.



The reason given by the opponent for holding that this is not reasonable is as follows: if a self-ascertainment valid cognizer were to refer to an awareness that realizes that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer, inferential valid cognizers in the continuum of children who do not know the term “valid cognizer” or in the continuum of followers of the Charvaka School who do not accept the existence of inferential cognizers would not be self-ascertainment valid cognizers.

As mentioned before, from a Buddhist point of view, all inferential valid cognizers are self-ascertainment valid cognizers.

Furthermore, inferential valid cognizers arise in the mental continuum of children who do not know the term “valid cognizer” as well as in the continuum of followers of the non-Buddhist Charvaka School who do not assert the existence of inferential cognizers. However, neither those children nor the followers of the Charvaka School are able to ascertain that the inferential valid cognizers in their continuum *are* valid cognizers.

Children who do not know the term “valid cognizer” are unable to realize that their inferential cognizers *are* valid cognizers, because, as mentioned above, one needs to know the term “valid cognizer” in order to realize this.

Followers of the Charvaka School are unable to realize that their inferential cognizers *are* valid cognizers, because they do not accept the existence of inferential valid cognizers.

Therefore, if a self-ascertainment valid cognizer were to refer to an awareness that realizes that a particular instance of a valid cognizer *is* a valid cognizer, the inferential valid cognizers of those children and the followers of the Charvaka School would have to realize that they themselves (*i.e.*, the inferential valid cognizers) *are* valid cognizers. However, since those inferential cognizers are unable to realize this, they would not qualify as self-ascertainment valid cognizers.

This is expressed by Gyalsab Je in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* when he says, “This is because it would follow that inferential [valid] cognizers in the continuum of children who do not know the verbal convention of *pramana*, or in the continuum of Charvakas, would not be self-ascertainment [valid cognizers].”

Lastly, the opponent examines whether self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers pertain to the ascertainment of (1) the definition of a valid cognizer:

Also, if one were to differentiate [between self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers from the point of view of] ascertaining or not ascertaining through one’s own power the (1) definition [of *pramana*] — being non-deceptive — it would follow that inferential [valid] cognizers in the continuum of Charvakas would not be self-ascertainment [valid cognizers] because Charvakas assert that inferential cognizers are deceptive.

According to the opponent, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (1) *the definition* of a valid cognizer, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that induces ascertainment through its own power of the definition of a valid cognizer, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of the definition of a valid cognizer through its own power.

This means that, if self-ascertainment and other-ascertainment valid cognizers were to pertain to the ascertainment of (1) *the definition* of a valid cognizer, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that realizes ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’, while an other-ascertainment valid cognizer would refer to a valid cognizer that does not realize ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

However, the opponent argues that this is not acceptable, because it would follow that inferential valid cognizers in the mental continuum of followers of the Charvaka School would not be self-ascertainment valid cognizers. The inferential valid cognizers of followers of the Charvaka School would not be self-ascertainment valid cognizers because if they were self-ascertainment valid cognizer they would have to realize that they themselves (*i.e.*, the inferential valid cognizers) are 'knowers that are newly non-deceptive'. Yet, the inferential valid cognizers in the continuum of followers of the Charvaka School do not realize that they themselves are 'knowers that are non-deceptive' because Charvakas assert that inferential awarenesses are deceptive.

This completes the examination of the two types of valid cognizers by an opponent.

[Response:] There is no fault, because when one examines *pramana* that ascertains that the instances of *pramana* [satisfy] the definition [of *pramana*], [one sees that] it is impossible for *pramana* not to induce ascertainment of [at least] some parts of its objects of comprehension through its own power.

Therefore, if the factor of non-deceptiveness is ascertained through the power of [the self-knower of a *pramana*, that *pramana*] is a self-ascertainment [valid cognizer]; if it is ascertained through the power of another [self-knower of a later *pramana* the earlier *pramana* is] an other-ascertainment [valid cognizer].

Our own system's response is that there is no fault, since the opponent's arguments do not harm our assertions with regard to the two types of valid cognizers. They do not harm our assertions because when one examines valid cognizers that realize that a particular valid cognizer is 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive' (as is done in this outline), one comes to see that all valid cognizers are able to induce ascertainment of at least some of their objects of comprehension through their own power.

However, this does not mean that all valid cognizers are able to induce ascertainment of their *final objects of comprehension* through their own power, for there are two types of valid cognizers, (1) self-ascertainment valid cognizers and (2) other-ascertainment valid cognizers.

As mentioned before, a self-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that realizes its final object of comprehension and thus induces ascertainment of its final object of comprehension through its own power. An other-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that does not realize its final object of comprehension and hence does not induce ascertainment of its final object of comprehension through its own power but requires ascertainment by another valid cognizer.

Therefore, as explained by Dharmottara, the self-knower of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer ascertains the valid cognizer's factor of non-deceptiveness with regard to the final object of comprehension of the valid cognizer, while the self-knower of an other-ascertainment valid cognizer does not ascertain the valid cognizer's factor of non-deceptiveness with regard to the final object of comprehension of the valid cognizer. Instead, the self-knower of an other-ascertainment valid cognizer requires another self-knower of a later valid cognizer that ascertains the factor of non-deceptiveness with regard to the final object of comprehension of the later valid cognizer.

This is expressed by Gyaltsab Je when he says, "Therefore, if the factor of non-deceptiveness is ascertained through the power of [the self-knower of a *pramana*, that *pramana*] is a self-ascertainment [valid cognizer]; if it is ascertained through the power of another [self-knower of a later *pramana*, the earlier *pramana* is] an other-ascertainment [valid cognizer]."

The latter passage indicates that among the different interpretations of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, ("*Realizing its own nature by itself* / [*Realizing*] *the very pramana through verbal convention*") given by the three masters of *pramana*

(Dharmottara, Prajñakaragupta, and Devendrabodhi), our own system accords with the first interpretation given by Dharmottara.

[Someone:] Well, then, it follows that inferential [valid] cognizers are not necessarily self-ascertainment [valid cognizers].

Here an opponent does not understand the meaning of the above-cited words from Gyaltsab Je's *Elucidation* that set forth an other-ascertainment valid cognizer, "if the factor of non-deceptiveness is ascertained through the power of [the self-knower of a *pramana*, that *pramana*] is a self-ascertainment [valid cognizer]."

The opponent thinks these words indicate that whatever is an inferential valid cognizer is not necessarily a self-ascertainment valid cognizer. According to the opponent, for instance, an inferential valid cognizer in the mental continuum of a follower of the Charvaka School realizing the presence of fire on a smoky mountain pass is not a self-ascertainment valid cognizer, because the self-knower of that inferential valid cognizer does not ascertain the factor of non-deceptiveness of the inferential cognizer through its own power. The self-knower does not ascertain the factor of non-deceptiveness through its own power, because it does not realize it. The self-knower does not realize the factor of non-deceptiveness, because, as explained before, a Charvaka does not assert that an inferential valid cognizer is non-deceptive.

[Response:] There is no fault: the sense of non-deceptiveness of a valid cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass — in dependence on the reason, 'smoke' — in the continuum of a Charvaka is well established, because the valid cognizer induces ascertainment through its own power so that [the Charvaka] is able to obtain the [final] object [of comprehension] just as realized.

Our response is that Gyaltsab Je's words do not indicate that an inferential cognizer in the mental continuum of a Charvaka is an other-ascertainment valid cognizer just because that inferential cognizer's self-knower is unable to ascertain the inferential cognizer's non-deceptiveness.

According to our own system, a Charvaka's inferential valid cognizer, such as an inferential cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass (which has arisen in dependence on the correct reason, 'smoke'), is a self-ascertainment valid cognizer because it is non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension, the fire on the smoky mountain pass.

The inferential cognizer is non-deceptive with regard to its final object of comprehension because it induces ascertainment of the fire on the mountain pass through its own power, enabling the Charvaka to obtain, *i.e.*, to seek out the fire.

[Someone:] If *pramana* and non-*pramana* are distinguished by *pramana* itself or a later arisen [*pramana*], it follows that composing shastras is pointless.

Here an opponent argues it is pointless to compose shastras (such as the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* by Dharmakirti) that present the difference between awarenesses that are valid cognizers and awarenesses that are not valid cognizers, because we already know this difference. We already know the difference because our valid cognizers are able to distinguish between awarenesses that are valid cognizers and those that are not.

The distinction between an awareness that is or is not a valid cognizer is made either in dependence on a valid cognizer's self-knower ("by *pramana* itself") or depending on a later valid cognizer ("a later arisen *pramana*"), such as an inferential valid cognizer.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Shastras counteract bewilderment,*

[Response:] It is not pointless to compose **shastras**, because they are necessary to **counteract bewilderment** with respect to the methods for [attaining] liberation, such as [regarding] the Vedas to be *pramana*, and so forth — it is for that purpose that shastras are composed.

Alternatively, [this line] can be applied to the words of an omniscient one.

Our own response is that it is not pointless to compose shastras because studying and contemplating them enable a person to overcome any confusion with respect to the methods for attaining liberation or Buddhahood; it enables a person to overcome, for instance, the misperception that the Vedas are *pramana*, etc.

Alternatively the line from the *Pramanavarttika*, “*Shastras counteract bewilderment*,” can be applied to the words of an omniscient one. In other words, it is not pointless to compose **shastras**, because they are necessary to **counteractbewilderment** with respect to the words of the Buddha, *i.e.*, the sutras. This means that the shastras elaborate on the sutras; studying and contemplating them enables a person to overcome any confusion and misunderstandings with regard to the words of the Buddha.

In brief, under this heading Gyaltsab Je cites an opponent who wonders which awareness ascertains that a valid cognizer satisfies the definition of valid cognizer. According to the opponent, there are two possibilities: either a valid cognizer itself realizes that it is a ‘knower that is newly non-deceptive’ or another subsequent valid cognizer is required to realize that the earlier valid cognizer was ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’.

Our own system’s response (based on Dharmottara’s interpretation) is that there are *some* valid cognizers which they themselves realize they are ‘knowers that are newly non-deceptive’ (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”) and *others* that are realized by other subsequent valid cognizers. (“*[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*”)

This means that the self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize their own nature by themselves because they realize the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* that are simultaneous and of one nature with those self-knowers, and because they realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of those *self-ascertainment valid cognizers*. Since the self-knowers of *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* realize the factor of non-deceptiveness of those valid cognizers, they also realize that the *self-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*. (“*Realizing its own nature by itself*”)

Regarding the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, although they realize the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* (that are simultaneous and of one nature with the self-knowers) and the factor of non-deceptiveness of those *other-ascertainment valid cognizers*, they do not realize that the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are non-deceptive with regard to the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers’ final objects of comprehension*. The self-knowers do not realize this because the *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* are not non-deceptive with regard to their *final objects of comprehension*.

Therefore, the self-knowers of *other-ascertainment valid cognizers* require a later valid cognizer of verbal convention, *i.e.*, a later *self-ascertainment valid cognizer*, the self-knower of which realizes that the *self-ascertainment valid cognizer* is non-deceptive with regard to its *final object of comprehension*. (“*[Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*”)

Gyaltsab Je then cites an opponent who argues that, according to the above explanation from our own system, it is not necessary to compose shastras (treatises on the word of the Buddha) that set forth the difference between awarenesses that are valid cognizers and awarenesses that are not valid cognizers, because we can already discern this difference in reliance on our self-knowers or other valid cognizers.

Our own system's reply is that nonetheless, it is necessary to compose shastras because they help practitioners to counteract bewilderment with respect to the words of the Buddha and with respect to the methods for attaining liberation and Buddhahood. (*"Shastras counteract bewilderment,"*).

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. When it comes to examining which awareness realizes that a valid cognizer satisfies the definition of valid cognizer, what are the two possibilities seen by the opponent at the beginning of this outline?
2. According to that opponent, what faults are there in these two possibilities?
3. What is Dharmottara's interpretation of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*"?
4. What are the two parts (the part directed outwards and the one directed inwards) with regard to an eye consciousness realizing blue?
5. Give/posit the meaning and an example of a self-ascertainment valid cognizer according to Dharmottara
6. Posit the meaning and an example of an other-ascertainment valid cognizer according to Dharmottara
7. What is a 'valid cognizer of *verbal convention*'?
8. What is the interpretation of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*" according to Prajnakaragupta?
9. What does ultimate truth refer to in the Chittamatra School?
10. What does conventional truth refer to in the Chittamatra School?
11. According to Prajnakaragupta's interpretation, why are valid cognizers realizing ultimate truth self-ascertainment valid cognizers?
12. According to Prajnakaragupta's interpretation, why are valid cognizers realizing conventional truths other-ascertainment valid cognizers?
13. What is the interpretation of the meaning of the two lines from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Realizing its own nature by itself / [Realizing] the very pramana through verbal convention*" according to Devendrabodhi?
14. What fault is incurred if an opponent asserts that a self-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer inducing ascertainment of an object through its own power and an other-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of an object through its own power?
15. What fault is incurred if an opponent asserts that a self-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer inducing ascertainment of a consciousness through its own power and an other-ascertainment valid cognizer refers to a valid cognizer that does not induce ascertainment of a consciousness through its own power?
16. Why is an inferential cognizer realizing fire on a smoky mountain pass in the mental continuum of a follower of the Charvaka School not an other-ascertainment valid cognizer but a self-ascertainment valid cognizer?
17. What is the meaning of the line from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Shastras counteract bewilderment*"?

## THE ATTRIBUTE

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized.*

Merely [being] non-deceptive does not fulfil the definition of *pramana* because it is **also** necessary to speak of **that which elucidates an object not cognized** before, *i.e.*, of a first, or new, cognition as a component of the definition [of *pramana*]. This indicates the characteristic that accords with the etymology of the original [Sanskrit] term *pramana*: being ‘*firstly* non-deceptive’ or ‘*newly* non-deceptive’.

When previously in the *Pramanavarttika* Dharmakirti presented the definition of *pramana* or valid cognizer, he *explicitly* explained only the component of being non-deceptive (*Pramanavarttika*: “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”).

However, one should not rely only on the explicit meaning of that line, for ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ does not qualify as the definition of valid cognizer. That definition is too broad because subsequent cognizers, such as the second moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue or a memory consciousness realizing a tree, are ‘knowers that are non-deceptive’ but not valid cognizers. They are not valid cognizers since they are not knowers that are *newly* non-deceptive. They are not knowers that are *newly* non-deceptive because they do not *newly* realize their objects. Subsequent cognizers do not *newly* realize their objects because they realize their objects in *dependence on* or *through the power of* former valid cognizers that realized the same objects.

A subsequent cognizer realizes its object through the power of an earlier valid cognizer, because a subsequent cognizer arises through the power of the earlier valid cognizer inducing the subsequent cognizer. Thus, subsequent cognizer is defined as: ‘a knower that is not a valid cognizer and that realizes what has already been realized by an earlier valid cognizer inducing it’.

Having previously in the *Pramanavarttika* introduced the definition of valid cognizer with the words, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”, here Dharmakirti says “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*” in order to emphasize that a valid cognizer is not only a consciousness that is non-deceptive but also a consciousness which elucidates or realizes an object that has not been cognized before. In other words, it is a consciousness that *newly* realizes its main object.

Therefore, Dharmakirti adds the attribute of ‘being new’ (*i.e.*, of newly getting at the object) since the definition of *pramana* or valid cognizer has two main components, (1) being new and (2) being non-deceptive.

This explanation is in accordance with the etymological meaning of the Sanskrit word *pramana*, for the first syllable ‘pra’ can be translated as “first” or “new”.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>This also explains why many scholars translate *pramana* as ‘prime cognizer’ when translating scriptures that set forth *pramana* from the perspective of the Vaibashika, Sautrantika, Chittamatra, or Madhyamika Svatantrika Schools (which assert that a valid cognizer is necessarily an awareness that *newly* realizes its object).

The term ‘prime cognizer’ is not used when referring to *pramana* from the perspective of the Madhyamika Prasangika School because proponents of this tenet system assert that any awareness which realizes its *main* object is *pramana*. According to the Prasangika School, even subsequent cognizers are *pramana*, which is why *pramana* is translated here as ‘valid cognizer’ instead of ‘prime cognizer’.

In Tibetan only one term is used to translate *pramana* (Tib: *tshad ma*) whatever the tenet system. This is why, in an attempt to reflect the same sentiment, I chose to translate *pramana* as ‘valid cognizer’, a term that is acceptable from the point of view all four tenet schools.

Someone says that the earlier [definition, ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’] and this one [‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’] are synonymous definitions of *pramana*.

Here, “someone” refers to Devendrabodhi who argues that both ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ (indicated earlier in the line, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”) and ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’ (indicated in the line, “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*”) can serve as the definition of valid cognizer.

[Response:] This is not feasible because with regard to those two, different generic images arise. [Therefore] the isolates of their definiendums must be different.

Our own system’s response is that it is not correct to assert that both ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ and ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’ qualify as the definition of valid cognizer, because these two appear differently to a conceptual consciousness and thus have different generic images. This means that the generic image of ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is different from the generic image of ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’. Therefore, even if both were definitions, they could not serve as the definition of a single definiendum, *i.e.*, of valid cognizer, but instead would have to be definitions of different definiendums. This is because a single definiendum cannot have different definitions.

Also, [someone] says that the earlier [line, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”] indicates the definition of conventional *pramana* and this [line, “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*”] indicates the definition of ultimate *pramana*.

Here, someone presents a debate based on Prajnakaragupta’s commentary, claiming that the line (“*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”) sets forth the definition of conventional valid cognizer, while this line, “*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*” sets forth the definition of ultimate valid cognizer.

In other words, according to this opponent, ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ is the definition of conventional valid cognizer and ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’ is the definition of ultimate valid cognizer.

Please note that conventional valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, conventional truth, while ultimate valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, ultimate truth.

Even though in general, the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is set forth from the point of view of the Sautrantika School, since this passage is based on Prajnakaragupta’s commentary — a treatise presented from the perspective of the Chittamattra School — this passage is also presented from the perspective of that philosophical system.

Therefore, ultimate truth here refers to emptiness according to the Chittamattra School (*i.e.*, the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities), while conventional truth refers to all phenomena other than ultimate truth.

[Response:] This is not feasible either, for if that were the case it would follow that an ultimate *pramana* is a conventional *pramana* because [an ultimate *pramana*] is a consciousness which is non-deceptive. Also, it would follow that a conventional *pramana* would be an ultimate *pramana* because [a conventional *pramana*] is that which elucidates an object not cognized [before].

Our response is that the opponent’s assertion is logically flawed because it would follow that an ultimate valid cognizer would be a conventional valid cognizer, and a conventional valid cognizer would be an ultimate valid cognizer.

An ultimate valid cognizer would be a conventional valid cognizer, because an ultimate valid cognizer would satisfy the opponent's alleged definition of conventional valid cognizer. It would satisfy the opponent's alleged definition of conventional valid cognizer, because an ultimate valid cognizer is 'a knower that is non-deceptive'.

Likewise, a conventional cognizer would be an ultimate valid cognizer, because a conventional valid cognizer would satisfy the opponent's alleged definition of ultimate valid cognizer. It would satisfy that definition, because a conventional valid cognizer is 'that which elucidates an object not cognized before'.

If someone says that the meaning [of the line "*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*"] is: 'It is an ultimate *pramana* because it is that which newly elucidates ultimate [truth] not cognized [before].'

In support of the opponent above, someone may contend that the line "*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*" indicates only ultimate valid cognizers since the meaning of this line is that a particular ultimate valid cognizer 'is an ultimate valid cognizer, because it is that which newly elucidates an ultimate truth not cognized before.'

[Response:] It follows that the former line also indicates ultimate *pramana* because it is permissible to say, "It is *pramana* with regard to ultimate [truth] because it is non-deceptive with regard to ultimate [truth]."

Our response is that the reason this opponent gives is not correct, because it contradicts the opponent's assertion that the former line ("*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*") only indicates conventional valid cognizers. It contradicts that assertion because it would follow that the earlier line also indicates ultimate valid cognizers. It would follow that the earlier line also indicates ultimate valid cognizers since it is permissible or correct to say that a particular ultimate valid cognizer "is a valid cognizer with regard to ultimate truth, because it is non-deceptive with regard to ultimate truth."

Further, since one would have to accept that this [line, "*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*"] also indicates the definition of conventional *pramana*, it is not feasible to separate [the meaning of the two lines].

Moreover, if one accepts that the line, "*Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized*" indicates not only ultimate valid cognizers but also conventional valid cognizers, one also needs to accept that this line not only sets forth the definition of ultimate valid cognizer but also the definition of conventional valid cognizer.

However, it is untenable to hold that this line presents the definition of each of these valid cognizers. Instead, it is more feasible to accept that the former and latter lines both set forth the definition of valid cognizer in general.

The way these two lines set forth the definition of valid cognizer is as follows: the former line explicitly presents the definition's component of being 'a knower that is non-deceptive' and implicitly the component of 'being new'.

The latter line, on the other hand, explicitly presents the definition of valid cognizer, for it explicitly sets forth the two main components of the definition of (1) being new ("*not cognized [before]*") and (2) being non-deceptive ("*that which elucidates an object*").

[Someone:] Well, then, what about Prajnakaragupta's explanation to that effect?



An opponent asks about Prajnakaragupta's explanation which appears to contradict the response given by our own system, since according to his commentary, Prajnakaragupta seems to say that the latter line does set forth the definition of ultimate valid cognizer.

[Response:] [His explanation] indicates that the words of the definition [are applicable] to an instant of an ultimate [*pramana*]. But [Prajnakaragupta] does not claim that [the two lines] indicate different definitions, since [one] is able [to understand that] in dependence on [Prajnakaragupta] only indicating [that the two lines set forth] the general definition of *pramana*.

Our own system's response is that in his commentary, Prajnakaragupta points out that the words expressing the definition of valid cognizer are applicable to an *instant* of an ultimate valid cognizer; in other words, he says that whatever is an ultimate valid cognizer is suitable to be called "a knower that is newly non-deceptive". However, this does not mean he contends that the latter line expresses the definition of ultimate valid cognizer and that the two lines set forth different definitions.

That Prajnakaragupta does not hold that the two lines set forth different definitions becomes obvious in dependence on the fact that Prajnakaragupta only indicates that the two lines set forth the *general* definition of *pramana*.

[Someone:] If *pramana* were that which newly elucidates an object, then a subsequent cognizer ascertaining blue would also be *pramana*, because it newly elucidates a generic image.

Here, someone starts a new debate. The person argues that according to the latter line ("Also, that which elucidates an object not cognized"), a subsequent cognizer, such as a memory consciousness realizing blue (which has been induced by the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates an object. The memory consciousness realizing blue newly elucidates an object because it newly elucidates the generic image of blue. The memory consciousness realizing blue newly elucidates the generic image of blue because it newly elucidates the generic image of blue that appears to that memory consciousness.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*After having realized its own nature, (5)  
A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained.*

[Response:] **After** a direct perceiver [*pramana*] has **realized** [the color] blue's **own** uncommon **nature**, a **consciousness** apprehending a **generic** [image] **is attained** through the power of that [former direct perceiver *pramana*] — but without that [later consciousness] having the capacity to determine its object through its own power.

Here, a *consciousness apprehending a generic image* refers to a conceptual consciousness. A conceptual consciousness is a *consciousness apprehending a generic image* because to a conceptual consciousness, a generic image (of its main object) appears. This is explained below.

Our own system's response is that a subsequent cognizer, such as the memory consciousness realizing blue (which has been induced by the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue) is not a valid cognizer because that memory consciousness has arisen through the power of a former valid cognizer and does not realize its object, blue, through its own power. The memory consciousness realizing blue has arisen through the power of a former valid cognizer because it has arisen through the power of the first moment of an eye consciousness (an eye direct perceiver) which realized the color blue's own uncommon nature, blue. Therefore, the memory

consciousness does not realize blue through its own power but through the power of the former eye consciousness which induced the memory.

Please note that the memory consciousness is a conceptual consciousness and thus unable to directly realize its main object, blue. Instead, it realizes blue indirectly by way of the appearance of the generic image (also called 'mental image' or 'meaning generality', (Tib: *don spyi*) of blue.

The generic image of blue is a representation of blue, not blue itself; it serves as an intermediate object that allows the conceptual consciousness to get at blue. The generic image is a subjective representation of blue in that it encompasses what we *mean* when we say "blue". This constructed representation or generic image of blue enables a conceptual awareness to remember and realize blue. Without the appearance of that generic image, a conceptual consciousness would not be able to apprehend or think about blue, since a conceptual consciousness does not function like a direct perceiver (e.g. an eye consciousness realizing blue) to which the color blue appears clearly or 'nakedly', without the medium of a generic image.

Furthermore, both the generic image of blue *and* blue appear to the memory consciousness realizing blue, even though the generic image of blue is a permanent phenomenon while blue is impermanent.

Yet the generic image of blue and blue appear mingled or mixed; the generic image of blue appears to be the actual color blue and the actual color blue appears to be the generic image of blue, so that the person in whose continuum the memory consciousness arises is unable to differentiate between the appearance of blue and the appearance of the generic image of blue.

However, although to that memory consciousness both blue and the generic image of blue appear, the memory consciousness realizes only blue; it does not realize the generic image of blue. The generic image of blue merely appears to it. Hence, the memory consciousness is not a valid cognizer because although the generic image of blue newly appears to it, the memory consciousness does not newly *elucidate* the generic image of blue. The memory consciousness does not newly elucidate the generic image of blue because it does not newly *realize* the generic image of blue.

Alternatively, the passages [of the *Pramanavarttika*] below can be combined with someone saying that **after having realized** blue's **own nature, a consciousness** apprehending **a generic** [image] is generated. That very [consciousness] **attains** [the status] of being *pramana*.

In this passage Gyaltsab Je provides another interpretation of the two lines, "*After having realized its own nature / A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained.*"

While above, Gyaltsab Je presents the two lines as referring to our own system's response to the opponent who argues that a subsequent cognizer realizing blue is a valid cognizer, here, he presents the two lines as referring to that same opponent's debate.

According to this second interpretation, the opponent says that subsequent to the first moment of an eye consciousness that realized blue's own nature, a memory consciousness arises. That memory consciousness newly elucidates the generic image of blue and thus attains the status of being a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, it is a valid cognizer.

Furthermore, according to the second interpretation, the three lines of the *Pramanavarttika* cited below ("*A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized / Since 'that which cognizes' is the thought / Since one is to analyze the self-characterized*") can be combined with the two lines here ("*After having realized its own nature / A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained.*"), in the sense that the latter three lines constitute our own system's response to these two lines.

[Response:] [*Pramana* apprehending a generic image] either (a) apprehends a generic image that is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon or (b) it apprehends a generic image [by means of] a self-characterized phenomenon appearing to [the *pramana*].

Our response is that a valid cognizer apprehending a generic image either (a) apprehends a generic image that is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon or (b) it apprehends a generic image by means of a self-characterized phenomenon appearing to that valid cognizer.

According to the Sautrantika School, self-characterized (Tib: *rang mtshan*, also called 'specifically characterized') and impermanent are equivalent. An impermanent phenomenon, such as a table, is a self-characterized phenomenon because when it appears to a direct perceiver, such as an eye consciousness, it appears with all the impermanent characteristics of the table that are in the sphere of vision of the eye consciousness (the table's color, shape, subtle particles, impermanence, and so forth)

The opposite of self-characterized is generally-characterized. Generally-characterized (Tib: *spyi mtshan*) and permanent are equivalent. A permanent phenomenon, such as unconditioned space or 'absence of elephant on the table', is generally-characterized because, according to the Sautrantika School, permanent phenomena can appear only to conceptual consciousnesses, not to direct perceivers; and when they appear to a conceptual consciousness they only appear with their distinguishing general characteristics.<sup>12</sup>

Returning to our response, a *valid cognizer apprehending a generic image* refers to a valid cognizer to which a generic image appears. In other words, a *valid cognizer apprehending a generic image* refers to a valid cognizer that is a conceptual consciousness.

Therefore, our own system's response is that with regard to a conceptual valid cognizer to which a generic image appears, there are two possibilities:

- (a) The generic image that appears to the conceptual valid cognizer is not based on or connected to a self-characterized (*i.e.*, impermanent) phenomenon, or
- (b) A self-characterized phenomenon appears to the conceptual valid cognizer.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized,*

If it is (a): it follows it is impossible for there to be *pramana* that apprehends an independent generic image, because if [a consciousness] is *pramana*, either it newly cognizes **a self-characterized phenomenon** that was **not cognized** before, or it is based on [a self-characterized phenomenon].

It is impossible for the generic image (a generally-characterized phenomenon) that appears to a conceptual valid cognizer not to be based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon, because there is no valid cognizer to which an *independent* generic image appears. There is no valid cognizer to which an *independent* generic

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<sup>12</sup> Anne Klein writes in *Knowledge and Liberation* [Snow Lion: New York, 1986], p. 36:

"For example, uncaused space —the mere lack of obstructive contact —is not produced from causes and conditions and has no specific features that can cast their aspects to a directly perceiving consciousness, such as the eye consciousness. Uncaused space has only one distinguishing general characteristic not shared with other phenomena; namely, its lack of obstructiveness. This is a specific characteristic of space in the sense of being unshared with any other phenomenon; however it is the only significant characteristic of *all* instances of space. This common or general characteristic of space can fully appear to thought. Thus, although thought is obscured from fully perceiving uncommon specific characteristics it is capable of fully perceiving general ones."

image appears because if an awareness is a valid cognizer, either it newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon or, if it does not realize a self-characterized phenomenon, it is based at least on a self-characterized phenomenon.

Please note that here, an 'independent generic image' refers to a generic image that does not depend on, *i.e.*, that is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon.

An example of a valid cognizer that newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon is the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing a chair. To such an eye consciousness, an independent generic image does not appear because it is a direct perceiver which gets at its object (the chair) directly, without the appearance of a generic image (*i.e.*, without the appearance of a generic image of the chair).

An example of a valid cognizer that newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon and to which a generic image appears is the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body. To that inferential cognizer, a generic image of the impermanence of the body appears. However, the generic image of the impermanence of the body is not an *independent* generic image because it is based on a self-characterized phenomenon. It is based on a self-characterized phenomenon because it is based on *the impermanence of the body*. The generic image of the impermanence of the body is based on *the impermanence of the body* because that generic image appears in dependence on the inferential cognizer taking to mind *the impermanence of the body*.

Nor do *independent* generic images appear to valid cognizers realizing generally-characterized phenomena, because their generic images must indirectly be based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon.

For instance, the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the selflessness of John realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon because it realizes the selflessness of John, which is permanent. However, the generic image of that valid cognizer (the generic image of the selflessness of John) is not an independent generic image because it is indirectly based on a self-characterized phenomenon. It is indirectly based on a self-characterized phenomenon because it is indirectly based on John. The generic image of the selflessness of John is indirectly based on John because it is directly based on the selflessness of John, while the selflessness of John is directly based on John.

[Dharmakīrti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since 'that which cognizes' is the thought,*

If it is (b): although there are *pramana* apprehending a generic [image], it does not follow that there is the fault of a subsequent cognizer being *pramana*, because 'those pursuing results will eventually engage in **that which** newly **cognizes** a self-characterized phenomenon, along with its object' **is the thought** when talking of *pramana* apprehending a generic image as a means of [cultivating a yogic direct perceiver] and when talking of 'Also that which elucidates an object not cognized' as a component of the definition of *pramana*.

If it is (b) (*i.e.*, the case of conceptual consciousnesses to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears): although there are conceptual *valid cognizers* to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears, this does not mean that a subsequent cognizer to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears (such as a memory consciousness to which the generic image of blue appears) is a valid cognizer.

This is because when Buddhist masters like Dignāga talk of a conceptual valid cognizer as a means or cause for cultivating a yogic direct perceiver or when they talk of the line "Also that which elucidates an object not cognized" as indicating the component of the definition of valid cognizer, the intent or thought behind these words is that 'those working towards attaining the resultant state of liberation or Buddhahood will

eventually meditate on a valid cognizer newly realizing a self-characterized phenomenon (such as a yogic direct perceiver realizing impermanence) and on its object (impermanence)'.

The meaning of the last paragraphs is as follows:<sup>13</sup> the opponent's claim that a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer is based on the opponent's assertion that an *awareness apprehending a generic image* (i.e., a conceptual consciousness to which a generic image appears) is an awareness to which an *independent* generic image appears. In other words, the opponent holds that the generic image that appears to a conceptual consciousness is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon.

Therefore, according to this assertion, a memory consciousness that has been induced by a direct valid cognizer realizing blue is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates its object, the generic image of blue. It newly elucidates the generic image of blue because the generic image of blue is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon (such as blue) and because the generic image appears newly and through the power of the memory consciousness.

However, as explained above, an *independent* generic image is impossible because a valid cognizer either newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon (which means that in the case of a conceptual consciousness, the generic image is based on the self-characterized phenomenon that is realized), or it newly realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon that is based on a self-characterized phenomenon.

In the case of a conceptual consciousness to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears (e.g. an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body): although there is a conceptual *valid cognizer* to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears (e.g. the *first* moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body), this does not mean that a subsequent cognizer (e.g. the *second* moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body or the memory consciousness realizing blue) is a valid cognizer.

The reason is that a conceptual consciousness realizes its object of comprehension by means of the appearance of the generic image of that object, even though the object of comprehension does not appear clearly or 'nakedly', the way it appears to a direct perceiver. And it is in reliance on such an 'indirect' realization of an object of comprehension by a conceptual valid cognizer that practitioners aspiring towards the attainment of liberation or Buddhahood will eventually engage in a direct realization of self-characterized phenomena, bringing them closer to their goals.

Hence, it is with this fact in mind that Buddhist masters like Dignaga talk of conceptual valid cognizers serving as a means or cause for the attainment of yogic direct perceivers directly realizing self-characterized phenomena, such as subtle impermanence, and so forth.

Likewise, it is with this fact in mind that Buddhist masters like Dignaga talk about the attribute of *newly elucidating* an object (an object which is either self-characterized or based on a self-characterized phenomenon) as a component of the definition of valid cognizer, when explaining the meaning of the line, "*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*".

Please note that the valid cognizers in which Buddhist practitioners will eventually engage or on which they will meditate are *yogic* direct perceivers ("those pursuing results will eventually engage in **that which** newly **cognizes** a self-characterized phenomenon").

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<sup>13</sup>The following explanation is according to Geshe Wangchen's commentary, *The Pervasive Rain of Utpala Flowers of Eloquent Speech* (Tib: *legs bshad utpala'i gru char*), p. 203.

These yogic direct perceivers newly cognize self-characterized phenomena because they are direct perceivers, and because according to the Sautrantika School, whatever is a direct perceiver necessarily apprehends a self-characterized phenomenon. Whatever is a direct perceiver necessarily apprehends a self-characterized phenomenon, because the proponents of the Sautrantika hold that only self-characterized phenomena can appear to direct perceivers; generally-characterized phenomena cannot appear to such non-conceptual awarenesses.

Yet this does not mean that direct perceivers do not *realize* generally-characterized phenomena. Direct perceivers realize generally-characterized phenomena but without these generally-characterized phenomena appearing to the direct perceivers.

Furthermore, since all awarenesses have an appearing object, a direct perceiver necessarily has an appearing object that is a self-characterized phenomenon.

Thus, when a direct perceiver realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon, it also realizes a self-characterized phenomenon. It realizes the generally-characterised phenomenon which does not appear to it, and it realizes the self-characterized phenomenon which appears to it.

For instance, the yogic direct perceiver realizing the selflessness of John realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon, because it realizes the selflessness of John (which is generally-characterized). But the selflessness of John does not appear to that direct perceiver.

Instead, a self-characterized phenomenon, John's *aggregates which are devoid of a self* (*i.e.*, devoid of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self) appear to that direct perceivers.

Therefore, that yogic direct perceiver realizes the selflessness of John without the selflessness appearing to it, and it realizes John's aggregates which are devoid of a self whilst those aggregates appear to the yogic direct perceiver.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed.* (6)

Those pursuing results eventually have to engage in *pramana* realizing a self-characterized phenomenon, along with its object, because they are **to analyze** the two positions, the existence or non-existence of the **self-characterized phenomenon** that is mainly pursued.

Those aspiring towards attaining the resultant state of liberation or Buddhahood eventually have to engage in, that is, meditate on a valid cognizer realizing a self-characterized phenomenon (*i.e.*, a yogic direct perceiver), because in order to reach their goal they need to investigate whether the self-characterized phenomenon they aspire to attain (such as the omniscient mind of a Buddha) exists or not.

In this regard Acharya Devendrabodhi explicitly finds fault with [the idea that] whatever is the object of comprehension of *pramana* is necessarily a self-characterized phenomenon and says that the meaning of this passage is that [whatever is the object of comprehension of *pramana*] is necessarily based upon a self-characterized phenomenon

When in his commentary Acharya Devendrabodhi expresses disapproval of the notion that any object of a valid cognizer must be a self-characterized phenomenon, he is criticizing the assumption that valid cognizers do not realize generally-characterized phenomena.

Also, Devendrabodhi points out that the meaning of the three lines of the *Pramanavarttika* ("A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized / Since 'that

*which cognizes' is the thought / Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed") is that the object of comprehension of a valid cognizer is necessarily based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon.*

Alternatively, the following is explained:

An alternate explanation is given with regard to the meaning of the last three lines of the *Pramanavarttika*. However, the wording of the last three lines in relation to this second interpretation differs from the usual wording (as cited above).

Furthermore, the second interpretation is not given from the point of view of the Sautrantika School but from the point of view of the Chittamatra School.

[Someone:] Since all functioning things have two modes of existence: (a) self-characterized and (b) generally-characterized phenomena, a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer because it elucidates the suchness of the generic [image].

An opponent asserts that since functioning things, *i.e.*, impermanent phenomena have two modes of existence: (a) self-characterized and (b) generally-characterized phenomena, a conceptual subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates the suchness of the generic image that appears to the subsequent cognizer.

'Impermanent phenomena have the mode of existence of self-characterized phenomena' because they are self-characterized and because they have characteristics that are self-characterized. For instance, an oak table has the mode of existence of self-characterized phenomena, since it itself is self-characterized and since its characteristics of being a table, impermanent, a product, etc. are self-characterized.

Likewise, 'impermanent phenomena have the mode of existence of generally-characterized phenomena' because they have characteristics that are generally-characterized or permanent. Taking the example of the oak table, although the oak table is not generally-characterized, its characteristics of being an object of knowledge, an object of a conceptual consciousness, selfless etc. are generally-characterized.

As impermanent phenomena have those two modes of existence, the opponent argues that a subsequent cognizer, such as the memory consciousness realizing blue, must be a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates the mode of existence or suchness of the generic image of blue. It newly elucidates the suchness of the generic image of blue because according to the opponent, the generic image that appears to that conceptual consciousness is not based on or connected to a self-characterized phenomenon, and thus newly elucidates the suchness of the generic image of blue through its own power.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*As for a self-characterized phenomenon being cognized,  
Since a consciousness will not know [two dissimilar modes of existence], owing to the mentalities  
Since [that which is established by way of its] own characteristics is to be analyzed.*

As mentioned above, the wording of the three lines according to the second interpretation is different from the usual wording of the three lines ("A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized / Since 'that which cognizes' is the thought / Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed").

[Response:] It follows that there is no fault such that it [would] follow that [an awareness] conceiving an independent generic [image] was a valid cognizer, because when a **consciousness** analyzes a **self-characterized phenomenon**, it **will not** come to **know**

two dissimilar [modes of existence], but only the uncommon mode of existence, the non-dual suchness [of that self-characterized phenomenon].

Our own system's response is that it does not follow that a conceptual subsequent cognizer apprehending an *independent* generic image (*i.e.*, a generic image that is not based on a self-characterized phenomenon) is a valid cognizer because such a conceptual subsequent valid cognizer does not newly elucidate the suchness of the generic image. It does not newly elucidate the suchness of the generic image because according to the Chittamatra School there is no other suchness except for emptiness.

Therefore, when an awareness engages in ultimate analysis of a self-characterized phenomenon it will find the uncommon ultimate mode of existence, the non-dual suchness or emptiness of that self-characterized phenomenon (*i.e.*, the lack of external existence of that phenomenon, or the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities).

This is also true from the point of view of the Madhyamika Svatantrika and the Madhyamika Prasangika School, for they also assert that when an awareness engages in ultimate analysis of a phenomenon, it will find the ultimate mode of existence or ultimate truth of that phenomenon. The difference is that according to the two Madhyamika systems, ultimate truth or emptiness does not refer to the lack of external existence or the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities. Instead, proponents of the Madhyamika Svatantrika assert that emptiness refers to the lack of true existence while the proponents of the Madhyamika Prasangika School hold that emptiness refers to the lack of inherent existence.

[Someone:] Well, then, why did [the Buddha] speak of external objects, and so forth?

An opponent asks why the Buddha spoke of external objects (e.g. during the First Wheel of Dharma and in the *Sutra of the Ten Bhūmis*) and of subject and object being different substantial entities, if, according to the Chittamatra School, there are no external phenomena, and subject and object are not different substantial entities?

[Response:] There is a purpose for speaking of those, because the Buddha spoke [of those] on account of disciples' **mentalities**, in order to gradually lead them to suchness.

According to the Chittamatra School, although there are no external phenomena, the Buddha set forth the existence of external phenomena in keeping with disciples' mentalities, *i.e.*, their predispositions, interests, and inclinations. By teaching them external existence, etc. the Buddha prevented some of his disciples from generating false views of nihilism and instead, was able to gradually lead them to the correct views of suchness, and so forth.

There are no two dissimilar modes of existence, because when one **analyzes** functioning things' mode of subsistence which is [established by way of its] **own characteristics**, there is nothing other than non-dual suchness, the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities.

There is no ultimate mode of existence other than suchness or emptiness, because when one examines the ultimate mode of subsistence of functioning things, one will find only non-dual suchness or emptiness, which refers to the lack of subject and object being different substantial entities or the lack of external existence.

According to the Chittamatra School, the ultimate mode of subsistence or emptiness of functioning things is established by way of its own characteristics.

In brief, under this heading Dharmakīrti sets forth the attribute of "being new", which is the other main component — next to "being non-deceptive" — of the definition of valid



cognizer. The words from the *Pramanavarttika* which express this attribute are “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*”. In other words, an awareness such as the first moment of an eye consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer, because it is a consciousness which elucidates an object that has not been cognized before, *i.e.*, it newly realizes its main object.

An opponent says that a memory consciousness realizing blue, which was induced by and arises after a valid cognizer realizing blue’s own nature (*i.e.*, blue), is a valid cognizer because it newly elucidates the generic image of blue. It newly elucidates the generic image of blue, because that generic image exists independently of any self-characterized phenomenon and because it newly appears to the memory consciousness. (“*After having realized its own nature / A consciousness of a generic [image] is attained.*”)

Our own system’s response is that there is no valid cognizer to which an independent generic image appears because a valid cognizer either newly realizes a self-characterized phenomenon or it is based on a self-characterized phenomenon. (“*A self-characterized phenomenon not cognized*”).

In the case of a conceptual valid cognizer which realizes a self-characterized phenomenon (such as the first moment of an inferential cognizer realizing the impermanence of the body), the generic image that appears to that conceptual consciousness does not exist independently of a self-characterized phenomenon because it is based on the self-characterized phenomenon (the impermanence of the body) that is realized by the consciousness.

In the case of a conceptual valid cognizer which realizes a generally-characterized phenomenon (such as the first moment of the inferential cognizer realizing the selflessness of John), the generic image does not exist independently of a self-characterized phenomenon because it is based indirectly on the self-characterized phenomenon (John) that is the basis for the selflessness realized by that valid cognizer.

Also, even though there are conceptual valid cognizers to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears, this does not mean that a subsequent cognizer to which a self-characterized phenomenon appears is a valid cognizer.

This is because when Buddhist masters like Dignaga describe a conceptual valid cognizer as a cause for cultivating a yogic direct perceiver and when they explain that the line “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*” indicates the components of the definition of valid cognizer, the thought behind these words is that ‘those who strive towards attaining liberation or Buddhahood will eventually meditate on a valid cognizer newly realizing a self-characterized phenomenon (such as a yogic direct perceiver realizing impermanence) and on its object (impermanence)’. (“*Since ‘that which cognizes’ is the thought,*”)

Those who strive to attain liberation or Buddhahood eventually have to meditate on a valid cognizer, *i.e.*, a yogic direct perceiver newly realizing a self-characterized phenomenon, because in order to reach their goal they have to examine whether the self-characterized result they aspire to attain (e.g. omniscience) exists or not. (“*Since the self-characterized phenomenon is to be analyzed.*”)

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the ‘attribute’ indicated under this heading?
2. What is the difference between the two lines of the *Pramanavarttika* (“*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*” and “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*”), each of which indicates the definition of valid cognizer?

3. Who is the opponent asserting that both ‘a knower that is non-deceptive’ (indicated in the line, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*”) and ‘that which elucidates an object not cognized before’ (indicated in the line, “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*”) can serve as the definition of valid cognizer? Why is this assertion wrong?
4. Why is it wrong to assert that the former line, “*Pramana is a non-deceptive consciousness*” indicates the definition of conventional valid cognizer and the latter line, “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*” indicates the definition of ultimate valid cognizer?
5. What is the reason for the opponent’s assertion that a memory consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer?
6. How does our own system refute the assertion that a memory consciousness realizing blue is a valid cognizer?
7. What is the generic image of blue and how does it appear to the memory consciousness realizing blue?
8. Why are there no independent generic images?
9. What is the intent or thought of Buddhist masters like Dignaga when they explain that a conceptual valid cognizer is the cause of yogic direct perceivers and that the line, “*Also that which elucidates an object not cognized*” indicates the components of the definition of valid cognizer?
10. What is the alternative interpretation of the three lines of the *Pramanavarttika* that is presented from the point of view of the Chittamatra School?

### **SHOWING THAT THE MUNI ALSO POSSESSES THAT DEFINITION (i.e., THAT THE MUNI IS A *PRAMANA BEING* OR THAT HIS AWARENESSES ARE *PRAMANA*)**

[This is divided into:]

Applying [to the Muni] the meaning of *pramana* that has already been explained

Explaining the meaning of ‘has become [a *pramanabeing*]’

### **APPLYING [TO THE MUNI] THE MEANING OF *PRAMANA* THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN EXPLAINED**

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Possessing that [pramana] the Bhagavan is the very pramana.*

Regarding the subject, the Muni, **the Bhagavan**, he **is the very *pramana*** with regard to the mode of existence and the varieties of phenomena, because he **possesses** consciousnesses that are newly non-deceptive with regard to all those, and because he is [newly non-deceptive].

Under this heading the meaning or definition of valid cognizer (that was explained above) is applied to the Buddha.

As mentioned before, the Buddha is not an actual valid cognizer because the Buddha is not a consciousness. However, the Buddha can be called “valid cognizer” because he is a *valid cognizer being* (*tshad ma'i skye bu*). He is a *valid cognizer being* because, through his own power (without depending on another teacher), he unerringly and effortlessly teaches those seeking release whatever they need to know to reach their goal.

Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says: regarding the subject, Buddha Shakyamuni, he is the very valid cognizer, *i.e.*, he can be called “valid cognizer” or he is a *valid cognizer being* with regard to the mode of existence and the varieties of all phenomena, because his awarenesses are ‘knowers that are newly non-deceptive’ with regard to the mode of existence and the varieties of phenomena, and because the Buddha himself is newly non-deceptive.

Please note that the mode of existence of phenomena (*ji lta ba*) refers to ultimate truths and the varieties of phenomena (*ji snyed pa*) refer to conventional truths.

So the Buddha can be called “valid cognizer”, or he is a *valid cognizer being*, because all of his awarenesses simultaneously and newly realize all phenomena — conventional and ultimate truths — and because the Buddha himself is newly non-deceptive with regard to those phenomena.

Saying that the Buddha is non-deceptive does not just indicate that the Buddha realizes all phenomena of the past, present, and future; it also emphasizes the fact that the Buddha is able to guide and instruct sentient beings in the most beneficial and effective way, provided they have the karma to receive such guidance and instruction.

With respect to the translation [of that line] in Devendrabodhi’s commentary, Devendrabodhi applies an example by saying “*in the same way*”.

According to the Tibetan translation of Devendrabodhi’s commentary, the line quoted from the *Pramanavarttika* is slightly different. Instead of “*Possessing that [pramana] the Bhagavan is the very pramana.*”, Devendrabodhi’s commentary says, “*In the same way the Bhagavan is the very pramana.*”

Here, the words “in the same way” describe the Bhagavan as an example of a valid cognizer. This means that in the same way as ‘a knower that is newly non-deceptive’ is called a “valid cognizer”, the Buddha can be called “valid cognizer” (though he is not an actual valid cognizer) because the Buddha is newly non-deceptive with regard to all phenomena.

Now this is investigated:

Next follows an investigation of the Buddha’s omniscient consciousness by an opponent:

[Someone:] Omniscient consciousnesses either (a) are or (b) are not valid cognizers with regard to all objects of knowledge.

If (b) they are not, it is pointless to make all those efforts to establish that the teacher is *pramana* by way of establishing that the teachings are *pramana*; and it will not be feasible to differentiate between our own teacher and other teachers as being or not being [worthy] to be followed.

Someone says: either the Buddha’s omniscient consciousnesses (a) are valid cognizers, *i.e.*, ‘knowers that are newly non-deceptive’ with regard to all objects of knowledge, or (b) they are not.

If (b) omniscient consciousnesses were not valid cognizers, it would not be possible to establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* or that he is reliable by way of establishing that his teachings are reliable, because the Buddha would not necessarily newly realize all objects of knowledge.

Also, it would not be reasonable to distinguish the Buddha from other teachers as being able to take disciples to liberation or Buddhahood.

If (a) they are, since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness directly and newly realizes all objects of knowledge, it is indeed *pramana*. [But] it follows that from the

second moment onwards, [omniscient consciousnesses] are not *pramana*, because there is nothing to be newly realized.

Assuming that the Buddha's omniscient consciousnesses are valid cognizers, the opponent presents the following debate:

The first moment of the omniscient consciousness which arises in the mental continuum of the first moment of the Buddha (*i.e.*, at the moment when the Buddha has newly attained full enlightenment) is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes all objects of knowledge.

Yet, it follows that the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness are not valid cognizers because there is nothing to be newly realized. There is nothing to be newly realized because the second and all subsequent moments realize what was already realized by the first moment of the omniscient consciousness.

If there is [something to be newly realized from the second moment onwards], since [the Buddha] has to exert himself in the methods to newly realize objects of comprehension, he has not already eliminated cognitive obstructions, for he is working towards newly accomplishing a path.

According to the opponent, if there were phenomena that the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness newly realized, then it follows that the first moment of the Buddha would not have eliminated cognitive obstructions.<sup>14</sup> He would not have eliminated cognitive obstructions because he would be working to accomplish a path he would not yet have attained. The first moment of the Buddha would be working to accomplish a path he would not yet have attained because he would still be exerting himself to attain the methods to enable him to newly realize phenomena. He would still be exerting himself to attain the methods to enable him to newly realize phenomena because there would be phenomena he would not yet have newly realized. There would be phenomena that the first moment of the Buddha would not yet have newly realized because there would be phenomena that the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness would newly realize.

If one thinks that [the second moment of the omniscient consciousness] is a valid cognizer merely because it is non-deceptive, then it is pointless to talk of the attributes of being "first, or new, and non-deceptive", and it is also impossible to refute [the idea] that a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer.

The opponent continues his debate by saying that if thought that the second moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it is a knower that is non-deceptive, then it would not make sense to set forth the two attributes or components of the definition of valid cognizer of (1) "being new" and (2) "being non-deceptive".

Likewise, it would not be possible to refute the wrong idea that a subsequent cognizer is a valid cognizer, since a subsequent cognizer is a knower that is non-deceptive.

[Response:] In that regard this needs to be asked: Does the second moment of the omniscient consciousness (a) newly arise immediately after the first moment of the

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<sup>14</sup>There are two types of obstructions: (1) afflictive and (2) cognitive obstructions. In the Sautrantika School, there is no clear explanation of the two types of obstructions. According to the Chittamatra School, afflictive obstructions refer to awarenesses grasping at a self-sufficient, substantially existent self, the afflictions (such as anger, attachment, etc.) that are induced by those consciousnesses, and the seeds of both the foregoing. They are also described as obstructions to liberation, for they are the obstructions that need to be eliminated by a person aspiring to attain liberation.

Cognitive obstructions refer to the ignorance grasping at subject and object as being different substantial entities (or external existence) and the seed of that awareness. They are also referred to as obstructions to omniscience, because they are the obstructions a Bodhisattva aspiring to attain Buddhahood needs to eliminate (after having eliminated afflictive obstructions) in order to achieve omniscience.

omniscient consciousness or (b) not? If (b) it does not, then it is necessary to accept [the first moment of the omniscient consciousness] to be permanent. If (a) it does, then since from the second moment onwards [omniscient consciousnesses] newly realize [their objects], they must be asserted to be valid cognizers.

In response to the opponent's debate, our own system asks the following question: Does the second moment of the omniscient consciousness (a) newly arise at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness ceases, or (b) does it not?

If the second moment of the omniscient consciousness does not newly arise at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness ceases (*i.e.*, immediately after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness), the first moment of the omniscient consciousness is permanent. The first moment of the omniscient consciousness would be permanent because it would not change moment by moment. It would not change moment by moment because, since the second moment of the omniscient consciousness did not arise immediately (or a moment) after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness, the first moment would remain in an unchanging state.

If the second moment of the omniscient consciousness newly arises immediately after the first moment, then, since the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness newly realize their object, they must be valid cognizers.

[Someone:] Since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards as yet-to-arise, there is nothing to be [newly] realized again [by the second and subsequent moments].

An opponent argues that since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness newly realizes the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness as *phenomena that will arise in the future*, or as *yet-to-arise*, the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

Since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the second and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness, there is nothing left to be newly realized from the second moment of the omniscient consciousness onwards.

[Response:] At the time of [the first moment of the omniscient consciousness] realizing [the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards as yet-to-arise], [the omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards either have or have not already arisen.

If they have already arisen, it is pointless to specify that they are yet-to-arise. If they have not yet [arisen], then since the factor of having-already-arisen is to be newly realized [by the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards], the idea that from the second moment onwards there are no valid cognizers is undermined.

Our own system's response is that when the first moment of the omniscient consciousness realizes the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness as yet-to-arise, the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness either (a) have already arisen or (b) have not yet arisen.

If (a) the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses have already arisen at the time of the first moment of the omniscient consciousness, it does not make sense to say that they are "yet-to-arise".

If (b) the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses have not yet arisen at the time of the first moment of the omniscient consciousness (realizing that the omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards are yet-to-arise),

then the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses are valid cognizers.

For instance, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes something that the first moment does not realize. It newly realizes something that the first moment does not realize because it newly realizes itself, *i.e.*, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness, as *having-arisen*.

Although the first moment of the omniscient consciousness also realizes the second moment, it realizes the second moment as *yet-to-arise* and not as *having-arisen*.

Likewise, the third moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes something that the first and the second moment do not realize. It newly realizes something that the first and the second moment do not realize because it newly realizes itself, *i.e.*, the third moment as *having-arisen*.

Although the first and the second moment of the omniscient consciousness also realize the third moment of the omniscient consciousness, they realize the third moment as *yet-to-arise* and not as *having-arisen*.

The same applies to the fourth and all subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

If it is not possible for there to be new objects of knowledge after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness has been generated, then whatever functioning thing there is would be permanent. If it is possible [for there to be new objects of knowledge], then since those new existents must be newly realized, [the idea that from the second moment onwards] there are no newly realizing valid cognizers is undermined.

If after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness (during the second or subsequent moments), there were no new phenomena, all functioning things, *i.e.*, impermanent phenomena would be permanent.

For instance, a chair that comes into existence at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness is a functioning thing and changes moment by moment. Therefore, the first moment of the chair exists simultaneously with the first moment of the omniscient consciousness. However, the first moment of the chair no longer exists during the second moment of the omniscient consciousness. Instead, during the second moment of the omniscient consciousness, the second moment of the chair will have come into existence.

However, if during the second moment of the omniscient consciousness there were no new objects of knowledge (such as the second moment of the chair), then functioning things (such as the first moment of the chair) would be permanent; they would not change moment by moment but remain in an unchanging state.

If after the first moment of the omniscient consciousness there *are* new phenomena, the notion that from the second moment onwards omniscient consciousnesses are not valid cognizers is undermined, because the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness will newly realize some functioning things as *having-arisen*.

For instance, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness is a valid cognizer because it not only *newly* realizes the second moment of the omniscient consciousness as *having-arisen*, it also *newly* realizes other phenomena, such as the second moment of the chair, as *having-arisen*.

In fact, since functioning things change moment by moment, the second moment of the omniscient consciousness *newly* realizes each moment of a functioning thing that exists simultaneously with the second moment of the omniscient consciousness as *having-arisen*.

Also, an eighth-bhumi [Bodhisattva] either (a) has or (b) has not become a Buddha. If (a) he has, then there would be a Buddha who has not eliminated middling-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation. If (b) he has not, then it is either possible or impossible for him to become a Buddha. If it were impossible, since it would be impossible for a sentient being to become a Buddha, there would be no one newly becoming a Buddha. Hence, it would be pointless [to discuss] the difference between the first moment of the omniscient consciousness [and subsequent omniscient consciousnesses].

If it is possible [for an eighth-bhumi Bodhisattva to become a Buddha], then when [that Bodhisattva], who was not [a Buddha] before, newly becomes a Buddha later on, it is definitely necessary to accept that [the omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards [in the continuum of other “older” Buddhas] newly realize that [new Buddha].

Our own system continues its reply by saying that a Bodhisattva on the eighth Bodhisattva *bhumi* or ground (a) either has or (b) has not attained Buddhahood.

If (a) a Bodhisattva on the eighth bhumi were to have attained Buddhahood, then there would be a fully enlightened Buddha who had not eliminated all objects of elimination of the path of meditation.<sup>15</sup>

Please note that the Mahayana path of meditation consists of ten levels (also called ‘grounds’ or ‘bhumis’). On each level, Bodhisattvas eliminate different layers of obstructions. The obstructions that are eliminated on the path of meditation are described as ‘objects of elimination of the path of meditation’, and can be subdivided into nine different types or layers of obstructions. These nine types are referred to as (1) big-big, (2) middling-big, (3) small-big, (4) big-middling, (5) middling-middling, (6) small-middling, (7) big-small, (8) middling-small and (9) small-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation. The nine types of object of elimination are eliminated gradually, with big-big objects of elimination being eliminated first and (9) small-small objects of elimination being eliminated last.

A Bodhisattva on the eighth bhumi still needs to attain the ninth and tenth bhumi before eliminating the subtlest obstructions and becoming a Buddha. The obstructions that are eliminated on the ninth bhumi are middling-small objects of elimination, and the obstructions that are eliminated on the tenth bhumi are small-small objects of elimination. Thus, the obstructions left in the continuum of a Bodhisattva on the eighth bhumi are middling-small and small-small objects of elimination.

Hence, if there were a Bodhisattva on that level who had attained the fully enlightened state of a Buddha, there would be a Buddha who had not eliminated middling-small and small-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation.

Please note that the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* only mentions middling-small objects of elimination (“If (a) he has, then there would be a Buddha who has not eliminated middling-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation”), for these words imply that if there were an eighth-bhumi Bodhisattva who had become a Buddha, there would also be a Buddha who had not eliminated small-small objects of elimination of the path of meditation.

The reason is that if a person has not eliminated middling-small objects of elimination he has not eliminated small-small objects of elimination, because the elimination of small-small objects of elimination is preceded by the elimination of middling-small objects of elimination.

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<sup>15</sup>The Mahayana path of meditation is the fourth of the five Mahayana paths, which are different levels of consciousness. The first four paths (the Mahayana path of accumulation, the Mahayana path of preparation, the Mahayana path of seeing, and the Mahayana path of meditation) take a Bodhisattva to the fifth path, the Mahayana path of no-more-learning, which refers to the omniscient consciousness of a Buddha.

Returning to our own system's reply: If (b) a Bodhisattva on the eighth bhumi has not attained Buddhahood, either it is possible for him to eventually remove all obstructions and become a Buddha, or it is not [possible].

If it were impossible for such a Bodhisattva to become a Buddha, there would be no-one who could attain enlightenment. If there were no-one who could attain enlightenment, no-one would attain an omniscient consciousness and thus it would be pointless to discuss the difference between the first moment and subsequent moments of an omniscient consciousness.

If it is possible for an eighth-bhumi Bodhisattva to become a Buddha, then when that Bodhisattva eventually newly attains Buddhahood, the second and subsequent moments of omniscient consciousnesses in the continuum of other Buddhas who attained Buddhahood before will *newly* realize that Buddha as having newly become a Buddha.

This is another reason why, from the second moment onwards, there are omniscient consciousnesses that are valid cognizers.

[Someone:] If [an omniscient consciousness] explicitly realizes the present, it is impossible for that omniscient consciousness to be unable to implicitly realize that all the 'yet-to-arise' (future things) and 'already-arisen' (past things) are the cause and effect of the 'present' (thing). Therefore, we assert that it is impossible [for omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards to realize new objects of comprehension.

Here, an opponent argues that when the first moment of the omniscient consciousness explicitly realizes a present functioning thing, such as a present car (*i.e.*, a car that exists at the same time as the first moment of the omniscient consciousness), it must implicitly realize the causes of that car ('the things that have already arisen') and the results of that car ('the things that are yet to arise').

Therefore, since the first moment of the omniscient consciousness newly realizes the past, present, and future – and thus 'that which has already arisen' and 'that which is yet to arise' – with regard to the car (as well as with regard to all other functioning things), there is nothing left to be newly realized by the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

[Response:] If we say: it follows that with regard to the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing there will be no dharmata that is newly realized, because there is no degeneration of the realization of dharmata that has already taken place on the path of preparation which is the cause [of the Mahayana path of seeing] – what will be your reply?

In response, our own system says: it follows that the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing<sup>16</sup> is not a valid cognizer, because it does not newly realize dharmata (*chos nyid*)<sup>17</sup>. The first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing does not newly realize dharmata because the Mahayana path of preparation, which is the cause of the Mahayana path of seeing, already realized dharmata and that realization has not degenerated.

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<sup>16</sup>The Mahayana path of seeing refers to the third of the five Mahayana paths. In general, the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing is a meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness for the first time. Although Bodhisattvas on the path of accumulation and preparation also realize emptiness, they realize emptiness conceptually, *i.e.*, through the medium of a mental image.

<sup>17</sup>Dharmata is a Sanskrit term that can also be translated as "reality itself" or "the way things are". It refers to emptiness or selflessness of phenomena. However, proponents of the Sautrantika School do not assert emptiness or selflessness of phenomena; they only assert selflessness of persons. Therefore, here, selflessness of phenomena or dharmata refers to emptiness according to the Chittamatra School; it refers to the 'lack of subject and object being different substantial entities' or 'the absence of external existence'.



[Someone:] Although there is nothing other than just dharmata itself that is newly realized [by the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing], since the manifest factor of dharmata must be newly realized, the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing is a valid cognizer.

The opponent says that the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing realizes nothing but dharmata (which has already been realized by the path of preparation) and is therefore not considered to be a valid cognizer from realizing an object other than dharmata that has not been realized before. Nonetheless, since the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing newly realizes the manifest factor of dharmata<sup>18</sup>, i.e., it *directly* realizes dharmata for the first time, it is accepted to be a valid cognizer.

[Response:] Well, then, even if the first moment of the omniscient consciousness has already realized a thing as yet-to-arise, that [thing] must be newly realized as already-arisen [by the omniscient consciousnesses] from the second moment onwards.

Our response is that according to the opponent's reasoning, the first moment of the Mahayana path of seeing is a valid cognizer because it newly realizes the manifest factor of dharmata, although dharmata has already been realized by the Mahayana path of preparation.

Therefore, following that same line of reasoning, the opponent also has to accept that the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousnesses are valid cognizers because they newly realize a thing as *having-arisen*, although that thing has already been realized by the first moment of the omniscient consciousness (which realized the thing as *yet-to-arise*).

[Someone:] Since it is impossible for a past and a future [thing] to be [things that are] yet-to-arise, whatever is [a thing] that is yet-to-arise is necessarily [a thing] that has already arisen.

An opponent argues that since past and future things exist and since they are impermanent, they are products and thus, by definition, have been created.<sup>19</sup> Since they have been created, they have arisen. Hence, the opponent maintains that there are no past and future things that are yet-to-arise. Instead, whatever is described as a thing that is yet to arise is in actuality something that has already arisen.

[Response:] Well, then, it follows that a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation has already eliminated the seeds of cognitive obstructions, because [those seeds] are yet to be eliminated. It [also] follows that he has already become a Buddha, because he is yet to become a Buddha.

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<sup>18</sup>For an awareness that realizes dharmata or emptiness directly, dharmata is a manifest phenomenon, whereas for an awareness realizing dharmata conceptually, dharmata is a hidden phenomenon. Therefore, the meditative equipoise directly realizing emptiness on the Mahayana path of seeing realizes the manifest factor of dharmata, whereas the conceptual consciousness realizing emptiness on the Mahayana path of preparation realizes the hidden factor of dharmata.

<sup>19</sup>Impermanent and product are equivalent. Therefore, whatever is impermanent is necessarily a product. The definition of product is: that which has been generated. This means that all impermanent phenomena necessarily have been generated and thus have arisen.

Our own system disputes that if whatever is yet-to-arise has necessarily already arisen, it would follow that a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation has already eliminated the seeds of cognitive obstructions<sup>20</sup>, because in the continuum of such a Bodhisattva those seeds are yet to be eliminated.

Likewise, it would follow that a Bodhisattva on the path of preparation has already attained Buddhahood because he is yet to attain Buddhahood.

[Someone:] In general, whatever is [a thing] that is yet-to-arise is necessarily [a thing] that has already arisen [but] whatever is [a thing] that is yet-to-arise in the continuum of a person is not necessarily [a thing] that has already arisen.

Here an opponent modifies the statement above by saying that even though in general, whatever is a thing that is yet-to-arise has necessarily already arisen, this is not necessarily the case for things that are about to arise *in the continuum of a person*, for those things have not necessarily already arisen.

[Response:] Well, then, there must be [a thing] in the continuum of a person that did not exist earlier as already arisen [while] later it does exist as already arisen. Therefore, with regard to that there is new realization.

Our own system responds that if there are things in the continuum of a person that are yet to arise but have not yet arisen, the opponent has to agree that when these things newly arise, simultaneously with the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness, these things are newly realized as *having-arisen* by the second or subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness.

If it is possible that from the second moment [of the omniscient consciousness] onwards, sentient beings newly extinguish obstructions, then since [those omniscient consciousnesses from the second moment onwards] must realize the new extinguishment of the obstructions, [the idea] that there are no newly-realizing valid cognizers is undermined.

Also, if it possible that at the time of the second moment and subsequent to the second moment of the omniscient consciousness, sentient beings newly eliminate obstructions to liberation or Buddhahood, the belief is undermined that from the second moment of the omniscient consciousness onwards there are no valid cognizers, because the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness newly realize these cessations of obstructions as having been newly attained.

Illustrated by those [examples], other cases should also be understood.

Based on the examples given above of phenomena that are newly realized by the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness, one should be able to understand other cases of phenomena that are newly realized by those awarenesses.

No matter how much I turn inwards to think about it, I do not contend that there are omniscient consciousnesses that are not *pramana* and that whatever is *pramana* does not newly realize [its object].

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<sup>20</sup>Here, 'seeds of cognitive obstructions' refer to the seeds of awarenesses that are cognitive obstructions. As explained in an earlier note, according to the Chittamatra School, the seeds of awarenesses that grasp at subject and object (or external objects) as being different substantial entities are 'seeds of cognitive obstructions', because awarenesses that grasp at subject and object as being different substantial entities are cognitive obstructions while the seeds of those awarenesses (which are also cognitive obstructions) refer to the potential of those awarenesses to arise in a person's continuum. A Buddha has eliminated both those awarenesses and their seeds, which is why a Buddha has overcome cognitive obstructions.

As a conclusion of this outline Gyaltsab Je adds a personal comment by saying that no matter how much he reflects on it, he does not hold that there are omniscient consciousnesses that are not valid cognizers or that whatever is a valid cognizer does not necessarily newly realize its object.

In brief, the Bhagavan Buddha Shakyamuni is the very *pramana*, i.e., he can be called “valid cognizer”, or he is a *valid cognizer being*, because he has awarenesses that are knowers which are newly non-deceptive with regard to all phenomena — conventional and ultimate truth — and because he is newly non-deceptive. (“*Possessing that [pramana] the Bhagavan is the very pramana.*”)

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why does the *Pramanavarttika* describe Buddha Shakyamuni as “the very *pramana*”?
2. What do the ‘mode of existence’ and the ‘varieties of phenomena’ refer to?
3. Why does an opponent assert that the second and subsequent moments of the omniscient consciousness are not valid cognizers?
4. What is the logical fault if there are no new objects of knowledge from the second moment of the omniscient consciousness onwards?
5. What does the second moment of the omniscient consciousness realize that the first moment of the omniscient consciousness does not?
6. What would be the logical fault if there were an eighth-bhumi Bodhisattva who had attained the enlightened state of a Buddha?
7. Why is the first moment of the path of seeing a valid cognizer?
8. Why does an opponent assert that all past and future things have already arisen?

## EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF ‘HAS BECOME [A PRAMANA BEING]’

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The purpose for saying “has become [a *pramanabeing*]”
- (2) Refuting objections with regard to [saying “has become a *pramanabeing*”]

## THE PURPOSE FOR SAYING “HAS BECOME [A PRAMANA BEING]”

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*In order to counter [the idea] that [the Buddha] has not been generated [Dignaga] says “has become [a pramana being]”. It is reasonable that [the Buddha] is pramana in dependence on accomplishing causes. (7)*

[Dignaga] stating “**has become** [a *pramana being*]” in the verse of homage has a eliminative purpose, because [Dignaga] **says** that an omniscient one “has become [a *pramana being*]” **in order to counter** [the idea] **that** [the Buddha] **has not been generated** by his own causes.

It has an affirmative purpose because [Dignaga says that an omniscient one “has become a *pramana being*”] for the sake of understanding that an omniscient one has been generated as **pramana in dependence on** fully completing familiarization with the **accomplishing causes** of method and wisdom.

Having set forth the definition of *pramana* or valid cognizer, and explained that the meaning of valid cognizer can be applied to the Buddha, Dharmakirti continues his elucidation of Dignaga's homage by describing the purpose for Dignaga saying that the Buddha "has become" *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*.

As mentioned before, even though the *Pramanavarttika*'s four chapters comment on Dignaga's entire text, i.e., the *Pramana-samuccaya* (*Compendium of Pramana*), the second chapter (considered the most important of the four chapters) comments only on the first two lines of the *Pramana-samuccaya*, which constitute Dignaga's homage to Buddha Shakyamuni.

The two lines of homage to Buddha Shakyamuni read:

*To the one who has become pramana, the one wishing to benefit migrators,  
To "the teacher", "the sugata", "the protector", I bow down.*

Under the present heading Dharmakirti describes two types of purpose for Dignaga stating that the Buddha *has become* a valid cognizer or a *valid cognizer being*.

The two types of purpose are (1) an eliminative purpose (*rnam bcad kyi dgos pa*) and (2) an affirmative purpose (*yongs gcod kyi dgos pa*). In general, an eliminative purpose is expressed by negating something that is not in accordance with reality, while an affirmative purpose is expressed by affirming something that is in accordance with reality.

The eliminative purpose for Dignaga stating that the Buddha has become a *valid cognizer being* is to negate the notion that the Buddha has not been generated by his own causes and conditions.

Therefore, from the point of view of the eliminative purpose, the statement "*To the one who has become pramana*" explicitly refutes the wrong view that the Buddha has not been generated by his own causes and conditions and implicitly indicates that the Buddha has been generated by those causes and conditions.

The affirming purpose for Dignaga stating that the Buddha has become a valid cognizer being is to indicate that the Buddha has become omniscient in dependence on perfecting familiarity with the main causes for enlightenment, commonly referred to as method and wisdom. As mentioned before, method refers to excellent intention, such as great compassion, Bodhicitta, and so forth, while wisdom refers to excellent application, such as the wisdom realizing selflessness, and so forth.

Hence, the statement, "*To the one who has become pramana*" not only helps students of the *Pramana-samuccaya* and the *Pramanavarttika* to come to the understanding that the Buddha has been generated in dependence upon his own causes and conditions, it also enables them to understand that the Buddha became *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being* in dependence on meditating on great compassion, Bodhicitta, wisdom, and so forth.

Alternatively, regarding the subject, an omniscient one, **it is reasonable** that he **is** a ***pramana being***, because **in dependence** on the correct syllogisms which are **the proofs** of [the Buddha] being an omniscient one he is established to be *pramana*.

Alternatively, Gyaltsab Je presents another interpretation of the last line of the three lines from the *Pramanavarttika* pertaining to this outline ("*It is reasonable that [the Buddha] is pramana in dependence on accomplishing causes*").

Instead of the affirmative purpose cited above, according to this interpretation, the line expresses the following affirmative purpose:

Dignaga says that the Buddha has become a *valid cognizer being* for the sake of conveying that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* (although there was a time he was just an ordinary being), since this can be established by correct syllogisms. It can be

established by correct syllogisms because the above mentioned five syllogisms of the *forward system* and the five syllogisms of the *reverse system* provide the proofs or reasons establishing that the Buddha (while a sentient being) was able to gradually transform and purify his mind and eventually became omniscient and thus a *valid cognizer being*.

Comprehending these syllogisms enables one to gain a firm understanding that the Buddha became a *valid cognizer being* in dependence on particular causes and conditions, and that a *valid cognizer being* who is self-arisen and permanent is impossible.

Please note that according to the second interpretation, the term “accomplishing cause” needs to be replaced by the term “proof”. But this is only necessary in English, for the Tibetan term “*sgrub bye*” holds both meanings.

Therefore, the line from the *Pramanavarttika* (according to the second interpretation) reads, “*It is reasonable that [the Buddha] is pramana in dependence on proofs*”.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the *eliminative purpose* for Dignaga saying in his homage to Buddha Shakyamuni that ‘the Buddha has become *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*’?
2. Why is the eliminative purpose described as ‘negative’?
3. What is the first affirmative purpose for Dignaga saying in his homage to Buddha Shakyamuni that ‘the Buddha has become *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*’?
4. What is the second affirmative purpose for Dignaga saying in his homage to Buddha Shakyamuni that ‘the Buddha has become *pramana* or a *valid cognizer being*’?
5. Why is the affirmative purpose described as ‘affirmative’?
6. What is the name of the text in which Dignaga pays homage to the Buddha by describing him as a *valid cognizer being*?

## REFUTING OBJECTIONS WITH REGARD TO [THE PURPOSE OF SAYING “HE HAS BECOME A *PRAMANABEING*”]

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting [the idea that Ishvara] who knows how to make all objects of knowledge is an omniscient one
- (2) Establishing that the one who directly cognizes the mode of existence the way they abide of all [objects of knowledge] is an omniscient one

## REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT ISHVARA] WHO KNOWS HOW TO MAKE ALL OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE IS AN OMNISCIENT ONE

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting [the idea of] Ishvara who created everything
- (2) Refuting the proofs [of the existence of the creator Ishvara cited by an opponent]

## REFUTING [THE IDEA OF] ISHVARA WHO CREATED EVERYTHING

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting [the idea that the creator Ishvara] is permanent
- (2) Refuting [the idea that the creator Ishvara is impermanent]

Please note that the next two outlines refute the notion of a creator God by way of refuting a permanent and an impermanent creator God.

The concept of God that is refuted here is a concept that was held by several ancient Indian non-Buddhist traditions that asserted an omniscient and omnipotent Supreme Being who was the principal law-maker for human beings and the creator of the universe, living beings, and so forth.

In ancient India there were also non-Buddhist philosophers who did not assert a creator God, while others set forth an abstract principle, like the followers of the Samkhya tradition who held that the physical world was a manifestation of what they called the ‘*primordial matter*’ (*prakṛti, spyi gtzo bo*).

The Vedic and Brahmanic traditions postulated numerous different gods, many of them personifications of natural forces. However, the Brahmanic tradition eventually reached the point that one of these gods (*Ishvara*) was regarded as superior to all others, and was even considered to be the omniscient and omnipotent creator of everything.

The latter view is refuted in this section of the *Pramanavarttika*, as reflected by the usage of the Tibetan term “*dbang phyug*” for God. *Dbang phyug* literally means ‘the one rich in power’ and is used as the Tibetan translation for *Ishvara*, the All-mighty or Creator of the World.

The concept of *Ishvara* that originated in India is similar to the concept of a single creator God in the monotheistic religions that emerged in the Middle East (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).

Yet, although Buddhism does not accept a creator God, it does set forth the existence of a category of beings called “celestial beings” (*deva, lha*). In some English translations these beings are also referred to as ‘gods’, which can be confusing, since celestial beings are essentially irrelevant to human existence. They are samsaric beings born in the celestial realm as a result of afflictions and karma, and once the karma that propelled them to take birth in that realm is exhausted, they can be reborn in other realms depending on their remaining karma. Celestial beings are not endowed with special powers to particularly influence and benefit others, and when it comes to spiritually transforming one’s mind in order to attain liberation or Buddhahood, a celestial birth is considered less useful than a human rebirth.

It is important to understand that Buddhism is not primarily concerned with refuting the notion of a creator God. Instead, it is chiefly concerned with developing methods to reduce and eventually eradicate the afflictions and their imprints in order to attain liberation and Buddhahood. In fact, very few of the Buddha’s numerous discourses directly address the question of God.

Furthermore, it is important to understand that the Buddhist refutation of God is addressed only to Buddhist practitioners, rather than to the followers of other religious systems that postulate a creator God.

For followers of theistic religions, belief in God can be extremely beneficial and must be respected. This is why numerous Buddhist masters (including H.H. the 14<sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama) strongly encourage followers of the principal theistic religions to maintain and possibly deepen their faith in God, for it can help them to live a moral and compassionate life.

For Buddhist practitioners striving for the attainment of liberation or Buddhahood, however, it is important to understand the non-existence of a creator God. This is

because the notion of an omnipotent being conflicts with some of the fundamental Buddhist concepts, realization of which is essential to progress on the Buddhist paths.

For instance, the notion of God cannot be reconciled with the Buddhist concepts of karma, selflessness, dependent arising, and Buddha-nature.

It is vital for Buddhist practitioners to understand that one's own mind is the creator of everything, of all happiness and suffering. It is in dependence on the mind — one's thoughts, ideas, judgments, etc. — that actions of body, speech, and mind are generated, resulting in one's different emotions and experiences.

Therefore, states of lasting happiness can only be attained by transforming and purifying one's own mind.

This is expressed by the Buddha when he says:

*One is one's own protector;  
One is one's own enemy;  
Regarding positive and negative deeds,  
One is one's own witness.*

This is also reflected in the practice of taking refuge, which is the entryway to Buddhist practice. Of the three objects of refuge — Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha — the Dharma that has been generated in one's own mental continuum is the *actual* refuge. Here, Dharma refers to qualities such as wisdom, love, compassion, etc. and the elimination of afflictions. The Buddha and Sangha are regarded as secondary objects of refuge, for they merely introduce and teach the means of cultivating the actual refuge. Without developing the Dharma in one's mental continuum, the guidance and advice of the Buddha and the Sangha will not be able to protect one, and their mental qualities will not be of benefit to oneself.

In order to overcome suffering, one needs to take personal responsibility, generate the determination to transform the mind, develop mindfulness, introspection, and so forth, until one is gradually able to break through one's habitual thought-patterns, and replace destructive mental states with love, compassion, wisdom, etc.

Therefore, the Buddhist paths to lasting happiness and the actualization of one's highest potential are based on main mental transformation, not on prayer or worship of an external entity, for only in dependence on one's own mind is one able to attain liberation and Buddhahood.

## REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT THE CREATOR ISHVARA] IS PERMANENT

[Someone:] God who created everything is a *pramana being* who is permanent and self-arisen.

Here, an opponent who asserts the existence of a creator God claims that God is a *valid cognizer being* who is permanent and self-arisen.

According to the opponent, God is a *valid cognizer being* because he realizes all phenomena and because he is omnipotent; he is permanent because he does not change moment by moment; and he is self-arisen because he does not depend on causes and conditions but has always existed as a *valid cognizer being*.

Please note that from a Buddhist point of view, Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* because he is omniscient, *i.e.*, he realizes all phenomena. In fact, being an omniscient being and a *valid cognizer being* are equivalent.

From the point of view of non-Buddhists asserting a creator God, being an omniscient being and a *valid cognizer being* are also equivalent. However, according to them, being omniscient not only means being able to realize all phenomena, it also means being able

to create all phenomena, *i.e.*, omnipotence. Here, God is omniscient because he realizes all phenomena and because he knows how to create all phenomena.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*There is no permanent pramana,  
Because pramana realizes existent things and,  
Because owing to impermanent objects of knowledge,  
That [pramana] is not fixed.* (8)

[Response:] Regarding the subject, God, it follows that he does not exist as permanent *pramana*, **because** whoever is [God] is necessarily **pramanarealizing existent things**. There is a pervasion, because if there are **objects of knowledge** that are **impermanent**, *pramana* that conceives them **is** necessarily **not fixed**.

In response to the assertion that there is a permanent and self-arisen God, our own system says: regarding the subject, God, it follows that he is not a permanent *pramana*, *i.e.*, a permanent *valid cognizer being*, because whoever is God is necessarily *pramana* realizing functioning things (impermanent phenomena)

In other words, God is not a permanent *pramana*, because if such God were to exist, any instant or moment of him would have to be a *valid cognizerbeing* who realizes impermanent phenomena.

There is a pervasion, because *pramana* perceiving impermanent objects of knowledge cannot be fixed or unchanging.

Please note that “there is a pervasion” means that the *reason* of the above-cited logical statement is pervaded by the *predicate* of the statement. The *reason* of the above-cited statement is: because whoever is [God] is necessarily *pramana* realizing existent things and the *predicate* is: he [God] does not exist as permanent *pramana*.

The reason is pervaded by the predicate because if *whoever is God is necessarily pramana realizing functioning things*, then it must be the case that *God does not exist as permanent pramana*. This is because *pramana* that perceives impermanent phenomena cannot be fixed or permanent.

Therefore, our own system says that God cannot be permanent because he perceives impermanent phenomena that are changing moment by moment. If he perceives phenomena that are changing moment by moment, he cannot be permanent, because whoever or whatever perceives phenomena that change moment by moment also has to change moment by moment.

Some who challenge the teachings of the Buddha say that [this verse] refutes permanent conventional *pramana*, but it does not refute permanent ultimate *pramana*.

According to Khedrup Je’s *Ocean of Reasoning, a Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika*, the opponents who say that the verse from the *Pramanavarttika* (“*There is no permanent pramana / Because pramana realizes existent things and / Because owing to impermanent objects of knowledge / That [pramana] is not fixed.*”) refutes permanent conventional *pramana* but not permanent ultimate *pramana* were Tibetans who were contemporaries of Khedrup Je.

This is slightly unusual because most of the opponents cited in the commentaries on the *Pramana-samuccaya* and the *Pramanavarttika* were Indian scholars.

As mentioned above, conventional valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, conventional truth, while ultimate valid cognizers are valid cognizers realizing their main object, ultimate truth.



According to the Sautrantika School, ultimate truth and impermanent phenomenon are equivalent, while conventional truth and permanent phenomenon are equivalent.

According to the Chittamatra School, ultimate truth refers to emptiness, while conventional truth refers to all phenomena other than emptiness.

[Response:] These are the words of those who do not have the slightest grasp of the logical presentation refuting permanence. If a permanent [phenomenon] that is a conventional *pramana* were to exist, there would be *pramana* that is [both] permanent and a thing. If that were the case, then consider [the following]: what ultimate or conventional distinction is there between [a permanent conventional *pramana* which is] the object of refutation and the ultimate *pramana* that is asserted by you?

Our own system responds by presenting the opponent with the following debate: even though you do not assert that there are permanent conventional valid cognizers, if there were a permanent conventional valid cognizer, it would have to be both permanent and impermanent. It would be impermanent because a valid cognizer necessarily changes moment by moment. If you were to accept that a conventional valid cognizer is both permanent and impermanent, you would also have to assert that an ultimate valid cognizer is both permanent and impermanent (an ultimate valid cognizer must be impermanent because it is a valid cognizer).

Therefore, consider the following: what is the difference between a conventional valid cognizer and an ultimate valid cognizer? Since they are both valid cognizers they must both be impermanent. So why would you assert that one is permanent while the other is not, even though there is no actual ultimate or conventional difference between those two awarenesses (except for the fact the one realizes ultimate truth and the other, conventional truth).

[Someone:] Although an eye that remains motionless gradually apprehends [different] forms, the eye does not do anything differently. Likewise, since objects of knowledge are impermanent, God's consciousness is not firm, but God who is cognizing is permanent.

Here, an opponent presents the analogy of an eye sense power which remains motionless or unchanging although different shapes and colors successively appear to it. Then these shapes and colors are perceived by the eye consciousness. Although the eye consciousness is impermanent, for it perceives different forms, the eye sense power remains unchanging, without doing anything differently from one moment to the next.

Please note that here, the eye does not refer to the eyeball but to the eye sense power. The eye sense power is traditionally described as a subtle inner physical form, to which shape and color appear and which produces the eye consciousness that is aware of and perceives the shapes and colors.

The opponent claims that, like the eye consciousness, God's consciousnesses realizing impermanent phenomena change moment by moment, while God who cognizes these things is permanent.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Because it is not feasible that those generated in sequence*

*Be generated by a permanent [phenomenon]*

*[And] because it is not suitable [for a permanent phenomenon to] depend [on conditions].*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, God's consciousnesses, it follows that **it is not feasible that they be generated by a permanent God**, because earlier and later consciousnesses **are generated in sequence**.

Our own system responds by saying that God's consciousnesses are not generated or created by a permanent God, since his earlier and later consciousnesses are generated in sequence.

If his consciousnesses are generated in sequence, God must be impermanent because at the time when God generates an earlier consciousness he is not yet able to generate a later consciousness. Hence there is a difference between God who generates an earlier consciousness and God who generates a later consciousness.

If earlier and later consciousnesses *were* generated by God himself, earlier and later consciousnesses would not be generated in sequence but simultaneously, since there is no difference between an earlier and a later God. There is no difference between an earlier and a later God because (according to the opponent) God is permanent and thus does not change moment by moment. Hence, there would be no reason for God not to generate all of his awarenesses at the same time.

Also, [a permanent God] does not generate [consciousnesses] in dependence on [other] conditions, **because it is not suitable** for a permanent [phenomenon] to **depend** on conditions.

Also, if God were not to generate his consciousnesses himself, but were to depend on other conditions that generated or created those consciousnesses, it would follow that God would depend on other conditions. However, this is not acceptable because a permanent phenomenon does not depend on impermanent conditions.

Further, if the eye does not do anything differently, it apprehends the later [object] at the time of apprehending the earlier [object].

Similarly, it is not possible for an eye sense power not to do anything differently from moment to moment, *i.e.*, to remain unchanging. This is because if the eye consciousness were to remain unchanging, the shape and color that appear to it later would have to appear to it at the same time as the shape and color that appear to it earlier.

This reasoning is similar to the above reasoning to refute a permanent God generating his consciousnesses in succession: If earlier and later shapes and colors appear to the eye sense power, the eye sense power must be impermanent, because the earlier eye sense power changes into the later eye sense power. The earlier eye sense power changes into the later eye sense power because the earlier shape and color do not appear to the later eye sense power, and the later shape and color do not appear to the earlier eye sense power.

If the eye sense power were permanent, there would be no difference between an earlier and later eye sense power. If there were no difference between an earlier and later eye sense power, the shapes and color that appear to the eye sense power in succession would appear to the eye sense power at the same time. If the earlier and later shapes and colors were to appear to the eye sense power at the same time, the later shape and color would appear at the time of the earlier shape and color.

In brief, God is not a permanent *valid cognizer being*, because he realizes functioning things. Since functioning things change moment by moment, the person or awareness that perceives these things also has to change moment by moment. Therefore, owing to objects of knowledge being impermanent, a *valid cognizer being* cannot be fixed or permanent. ("*There is no permanent pramana / Because pramana realizes existent things and / Because owing to impermanent objects of knowledge / That [pramana] is not fixed.*")

Nor is it feasible to assert that God's consciousnesses are impermanent while God is permanent, because God's earlier and later consciousnesses are generated sequentially, and something that is generated in sequence cannot be generated by a permanent

phenomenon. (*"Because it is not feasible that those generated in sequence / Are generated by a permanent [phenomenon]"*)

Similarly, it is not correct to hold that God depends on other conditions that generate his consciousnesses, because God is permanent and a permanent phenomenon does not depend on impermanent conditions. (*"[And] because it is not suitable [for a permanent phenomenon to] depend[on conditions]."*)

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the meaning of 'self-arisen', and what would be the implications if God were self-arisen?
2. What does it mean to be omniscient from a Buddhist point of view, and from the point of view of a non-Buddhist asserting a creator God?
3. Why does a person or awareness perceiving impermanent phenomena have to be impermanent?
4. How does our own system refute the notion that conventional valid cognizers are impermanent while ultimate valid cognizers are permanent?
5. What is the analogy cited by an opponent claiming that God is permanent while his consciousnesses are impermanent?
6. How does our own system refute the analogy?
7. How does our own system refute the view that God is permanent while his consciousnesses are impermanent?
8. What is the fault incurred if one asserts that God is permanent and that he depends on other conditions that generate his consciousnesses?

## REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT THE CREATOR ISHVARA] IS IMPERMANENT

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since [God has] not [been] benefited in any way,  
Although [he is] impermanent, there is no pramana.*

[Someone:] **Although** God himself **is impermanent**, he did not previously experience attachment, etc., while in samsara nor, as an antidote to that, [did he] depend on the accomplishing causes of familiarizing with generosity, etc. Instead, since beginningless time, he has been generated by an earlier continuum of a similar type as being free from attachment and omniscient.

An opponent says that God is impermanent and thus changes moment by moment. However, this does not mean that there was a time when God was not omniscient nor a *valid cognizer being*.

Unlike the Buddha, God was not formerly an ordinary person taking repeated birth in samsara under the control of contaminated karma and afflictions such as anger, attachment, etc.; then eventually entering the Mahayana path, meditating on the six paramitas such as generosity, morality, etc., in order to attain the omniscient state of a *valid cognizer being*.

Instead, God is self-arisen because he has never depended on causes and conditions other than himself; since beginningless time God has been generated from former moments of God who were of a similar type in that they were always free from attachment and always omniscient.

[Response:] Regarding the subject, God, it follows that **there is no *pramana*** that is a proof [establishing that] he is an omniscient one who has been generated by an earlier continuum of a similar type, because there has not been any previous moment during an earlier samsaric period when [he] has been harmed or **benefited in any way** by conditions that are thoroughly afflicted or completely pure.

In response, our own system says that there is no *pramana* that is a proof establishing that God is an Omniscient Being who has been generated by an earlier continuum of a similar type, *i.e.*, as omniscient and free from any fault.

Here, *pramana* does not mean 'valid cognizer' but correct reason or proof.

Therefore, according to our own system, there is no proof or correct reason establishing that God has been generated by an earlier continuum of God who was a *valid cognizer being*. This is because, unlike the Buddha, there has never been any time when God was an ordinary being who was troubled by thoroughly afflicted states of mind, such as anger, attachment, etc., nor benefited by completely pure states of mind, such as a meditative equipoise realizing the ultimate mode of existence of phenomena.

If God had once been a samsaric being who gradually transformed and completely purified his mind, it would be possible to establish that God is an omniscient valid cognizer being, just as it is possible with regard to the Buddha.

Alternatively, according to Devendrabodhi's explanation, the line [from the ***Pramanavarttika***, "*Since [God has] not [been] benefited in any way*"] should be applied as [one of the] previous proofs [which establish that a creator God is not permanent].

Alternatively, Devendrabodhi asserts that the line, "*Since [God has] not [been] benefited in any way*" should be applied to the previous outline which refutes the existence of a permanent creator God.

In other words, according to Devendrabodhi, the line, "*Since [God has] not [been] benefited in any way*" does not serve as a proof or correct reason establishing that there is no *impermanent* creator God; it serves as a proof or correct reason establishing that there is no *permanent* creator God.

This means that the line "*Since [God has] not [been] benefited in any way*" is conjoined with verse (9) of the ***Pramanavarttika*** ("*Because it is not feasible/ That those generated in sequence/ Be generated by a permanent [phenomenon]/ [And] because it is not suitable [for a permanent phenomenon to] depend [on conditions]*")

The meaning of those lines is:

Regarding the subject, God's consciousnesses, it follows that **it is not feasible that they be generated by a permanent God**, because earlier and later consciousnesses **are generated in sequence**.

Also, [a permanent God] does not generate [consciousnesses] in dependence on [other] conditions, **because it is not suitable** for a permanent [phenomenon] to **depend** on conditions and **because God has not been benefitted** [by conditions] **in any way**.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the opponent's assertion with regard to God being impermanent?

2. What is our own system's argument for asserting that God is not impermanent?
3. What is the meaning of *pramana* in this outline?
4. Why would it be possible to establish that is God is an omniscient valid cognizer being if he had once been a samsaric being who gradually transformed and completely purified his mind?
5. How does Devendrabodhi interpret the line from the *Pramanavarttika*, "Since [God has] not [been] benefited in any way"

## REFUTING THE PROOFS [OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE CREATOR ISHVARA CITED BY AN OPPONENT]

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Demonstrating that the proofs are wrong
- (2) Demonstrating that being the creator of all [knowledge-objects] is negated by *pramana*

### DEMONSTRATING THAT THE PROOFS ARE WRONG

[This is divided into:]

- (1) A brief demonstration
- (2) An extensive explanation

### A BRIEF DEMONSTRATION

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[The reason] such as that they act intermittently, have a specific shape, Perform a function, and so forth,*

[Someone:] "Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because **they act intermittently**, like an axe; because they **have a specific shape**, like a vase, etc.; and because they are able to **perform a function**, like a battle-axe."

Here, an opponent cites three different reasons which he asserts to be correct reasons establishing that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are created by God.

When expressed in the form of syllogisms, the three reasons are as follows:

- a) *Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because they act intermittently. For instance, like an axe.*
- b) *Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because they have a specific shape. For instance, like a vase.*
- c) *Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because they are able to perform a function. For instance, like a battle-axe.*

As mentioned before, a syllogism has four parts: (a) subject, (b) predicate, (c) reason and (d) example.

In the case of the three syllogisms, the subject and predicate are the same. "Worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments" is the subject and "to be preceded by the awareness of a creator" the predicate.

Worldly abodes refer to the samsaric realms, the Desire-, Form- and Formless Realms; bodies, to the physical bodies of sentient beings, such as humans and animals; and enjoyments – or objects of enjoyment – to the sense objects such as shape, color, sound, and so forth. Worldly abodes serve as the physical basis of the bodies of living beings, while the bodies of living beings serve as the physical basis of the objects of enjoyment, shape, color, sound etc.

The reason of the first syllogism is “to act intermittently”, the reason of the second syllogism, “to have a specific shape”, and the reason of the third syllogism “to be able to perform a function”.

The example of the first syllogism is “an axe”, the example of the second syllogism “a vase”, and the example of the third syllogism “a battle-axe”.

The composite of the two, the subject (“worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments”) and the predicate (“to be preceded by the awareness of a creator”), constitutes the *object that is to be established*, also called the *thesis*, and is the same for the three syllogisms. Thus, according to the opponent, the three reasons establish the same *thesis*; all three establish that “worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of a creator”.

Regarding the first reason, “to act intermittently” – or literally: “to remain/wait and engage in activities” (*sdod cing sdod cing las la 'jug pa*) – means to engage in different activities at different times.

Worldly abodes, e.g. the celestial realms, act intermittently because they serve temporarily as the realm of some being who had accumulated the karma to be reborn there. Once that karma is exhausted, the celestial realms no longer act as a base for that person (unless a new karma ripens to be born there). Similarly, planet Earth serves as the temporary living space of those who have accumulated the karma to take birth here.

Bodies act intermittently because at times they move, at times they rest, etc. Even though the mind controls some of those physical processes, most of them occur without a conscious effort. The human body, for instance, naturally breathes in and out, digests food, sweats, secretes hormones, protects itself against bacteria, viruses, etc., and so forth.

Enjoyments – i.e., the objects of the senses – act intermittently because at times they provide pleasure, at times sustain the physical environment, trigger chemical processes, and so forth. For instance, water (a tangible sense object) sometimes serves as a carrier distributing essential nutrients to cells; sometimes it removes waste products, sometimes it participates in the biochemical breakdown of food or regulates body-temperature, and so on.

Regarding the second reason, “to have a specific shape” (*dbyibs khyad par can dang ldan pa*) means that worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments have a unique shape that was made by someone.

Regarding the third reason, “to be able to perform a function” (*don byed nus pa*) means that worldly abodes, etc. are able to perform the function of, for instance, creating their own results.

The opponent asserts that it is not possible for inanimate objects (such as worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments) to engage periodically in different activities, have a specific shape, and perform the function such as generating their own results without the intervention by a creator, that is, without being deliberately created and controlled by an ingenious being such as God.

Regarding the examples that are part of the three syllogisms, they are all man-made objects:

As an example of the first syllogism the opponent cites an axe. An axe is a phenomenon which acts intermittently because at times it cuts wood and at times it rests embedded in a wood block. Also, an axe is preceded by the awareness of a creator because it is preceded by the motivation of the person who designs or makes the axe.

For the second syllogism the opponent gives the example of a vase because a vase is defined by its unique shape, being round-bellied and having a flat base. A vase is preceded by the awareness of a creator since it is preceded by the motivation of, for instance, the potter who shaped the vase.

The example of the third syllogism is a battle-axe. A battle-axe is able to perform a function because it generates its own results – results such as injuries inflicted during combat. As before, a battle-axe is preceded by the awareness of a creator because it is man-made and thus preceded by the motivation of the person who made the axe.

The opponent directs the syllogisms at Buddhists who do not accept the existence of a creator God. According to the opponent, once the defendants (*i.e.*, those to whom the syllogisms are directed) realize that the examples (man-made objects such as axes, etc.) must be preceded by the awareness of a creator (*i.e.*, the person who designs or makes these objects) because axes, etc. act intermittently, have a specific shape or are able to perform a function, they will be able to realize that objects that are not man-made (such as worldly abodes, etc.) must also be preceded by the mind or the motivation of a creator. They are preceded by the mind of a creator because they too act intermittently, have a specific shape, and are able to perform a function.

In other words – according to the opponent – taking the example of the first syllogism: the defendant of the first syllogism realizes the *pervasion* of the first syllogism based on a man-made example, an axe. The *pervasion* of the first syllogism is: “whatever acts intermittently is necessarily preceded by the awareness of a creator”. Hence, the opponent holds that the defendant of the first syllogism realizes – based on an axe – that whatever acts intermittently is necessarily preceded by the awareness of a creator. This means that the defendant realizes that an axe acts intermittently and therefore must be preceded by the mind of a creator. Here, the creator is not God, but, as mentioned before, the person who designs or makes the axe.

Thereafter, the defendant comes to realize the *pervasion* of the first syllogism based on the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments. This means that the defendant realizes that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments act intermittently and therefore must be preceded by the mind of a creator. However, here the creator refers to a creator God. Once the defendant realizes the *pervasion* of that syllogism on the basis of the subject, he realizes that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by the awareness of a creator, which is the thesis of the first syllogism. At that time, he is no longer the defendant of the syllogism.

According to the opponent, the defendants of the second and third syllogism also realize the *pervasion* of their respective syllogisms initially based on the example and thereafter on the basis of the subject, worldly abodes, etc. As before, this means that the defendant of the second syllogism realizes that whatever has a specific shape is necessarily preceded by the awareness of a creator, first based on a vase and thereafter based on worldly abodes, etc. Likewise, the defendant of the third syllogism realizes that whatever is able to perform a function is necessarily preceded by the awareness of a creator, first based on a battle-axe and then based on worldly abodes, etc.

The opponent cites man-made objects as examples of the three syllogisms, for he asserts that it is easier to realize the pervasion of each syllogism in dependence on one of the man-made examples (an axe, etc.) than in dependence on the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments.

The opponent holds that just as man-made objects have different shapes, colors, functions, etc. owing to the diverse ideas of the people who design and create them,

likewise natural phenomena such as planet Earth, the human body etc. can only come into existence in dependence on an intelligent creator; their variety and complexity is only possible if there is a creator God who conceived and devised them.

From these [reasons] and others, it is established that [abodes, bodies and enjoyments] have a creator whose mind precedes them, and also that that [creator] is God.

According to the opponent, not only do the three syllogisms establish that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of a creator, they also establish that the creator is God and that God creates those abodes, etc. Therefore, the opponent holds that when the defendants realize in dependence on one of the three reasons that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the mind of a creator, the defendants will thereafter automatically realize that the creator is God and that he created those phenomena.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Either they establish the accepted, or the examples are not established,*

[Response:] If [the reasons of your syllogisms] were merely to establish that [abodes, bodies and enjoyments] are in general preceded by an awareness, it would follow they are not correct proofs [establishing something] not already **accepted** by Buddhists, because Buddhists have already established – and not forgotten – that [abodes, bodies, and enjoyments] have been generated by the causes of [abodes, etc.], karma of volition.

In response, our own system examines the predicate of the three syllogisms (“preceded by the awareness of a creator”) and presents three debates that establish the logical flaws of the syllogisms with regard to the predicate.

The first debate is:

If the opponent’s syllogisms were merely to establish that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by an awareness, it would follow that the three syllogisms are not correct syllogisms. They would not be correct because they are addressed to Buddhists but would not establish anything that Buddhists have not already established. They would not establish something that Buddhists have not yet established because Buddhists have already established with valid cognition, *i.e.*, have realized – and not forgotten – that worldly abodes are preceded by an awareness.

Please note that if the predicate of the three syllogisms were to be “preceded by an awareness”, the thesis of the syllogisms would be “worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by an awareness”. Also, if a syllogism is a correct syllogism, its defendant has necessarily *not* yet realized the thesis of the syllogism. Its defendant has not yet realized the thesis of the syllogism, because the purpose of a syllogism is to newly establish the thesis. In other words, in dependence on the syllogism’s reason, the defendant *will* newly realize the thesis. Once he realizes the thesis, he is no longer a ‘defendant of that syllogism’ (*i.e.*, the person to whom the syllogism is directed).

Buddhists have already realized the thesis of the three syllogisms because they have realized that worldly abodes etc. are preceded by an awareness. They have realized that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by an awareness because they have realized that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by *karma that is volition* (which is an awareness).

From a Buddhist point of view, karma can be categorized into, (1) *karma that is volition* and (2) *volitional karma*.

Of the three types of karma – (a) karma of the body, (b) karma of speech, and (c) karma of the mind – *karma that is volition* refers to karma of the mind, while *volitional karma* refers to karma of speech and karma of the body.



More specifically, *karma that is volition* refers to the mental factor of volition. Volition is one of the five mental factors that are concomitant with and accompany every main mind. The four other mental factors are: feeling, discrimination, attention, and contact. The principal function of the mental factor of volition is to direct or move the mind toward an object so that the mind becomes involved with that object. Volition is the motivating element of consciousness that causes the mind to become involved with and apprehend an object. Just as a piece of iron is attracted to a nearby magnet, by its mere existence, volition draws the mind to different objects.

Thus, volition is an awareness that is mental karma or *karma that is volition*. The other type of karma is *volitional karma* and refers to volitional verbal and physical actions.

Volitional physical or verbal actions (i.e., *volitional karma*) are always preceded by a virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral mental karma and thus by the mental factor of volition (i.e., *karma that is volition*), which initiates or induces the volitional actions of the body or speech.

Taking the example of killing, the mental factor of volition at the time of planning to kill someone is a *karma that is volition*, while the actual physical act of killing is a *volitional karma*.

Buddhists have realized that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by *karma that is volition*, because from a Buddhist point of view, worldly abodes, etc. are the results of, and therefore preceded by, karma of body, speech or mind. Worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments that are the results of karma of the body or speech are necessarily preceded by *karma that is volition*, because as mentioned above, physical and mental karma are always the result of, and thus preceded, by mental karma.

Vasubandhu says in the *Abhidharmakosha*:

*The various worlds are generated by karma.*

Chandrakirti says in his *Madhyamikavatara (Supplement to the Middle Way)*:

*It is mind itself that constructs the world of sentient beings  
And the extremely diverse worldly environment.  
It is taught that all migrators were generated by karma;  
If mind were to be negated there would be no karma.*

The word “or” [from the line, “*Either they establish the accepted, or the examples are not established*”] pertains to [the following] later analysis: If [the reasons of the three syllogisms] were to establish that [worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments] are created by a permanent consciousness, it would follow that the **examples** of these syllogisms **are not established**, because a permanent functioning thing is impossible.

The second debate presented by our own system is indicated in the *Pramanavarttika* with the words, “*or the examples are not established*”. Thus, the word “or” pertains to this later or second debate which also analyses the syllogisms’ predicate. The debate is as follows:

If the opponent were to assert that the predicate of the three syllogisms is: “to be preceded by the *permanent* awareness of a creator” the syllogisms would be faulty. In other words, if according to the opponent, the reasons of the three syllogisms (“to act intermittently”, “to have a specific shape”, and “to perform a function”) were to establish that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the *permanent* awareness of a creator, the three syllogisms would not be correct syllogisms. They would not be correct because they would not have any examples.

Please note that, as mentioned above, before the defendant of a syllogism is able to realize the syllogism’s pervasion on the basis of its subject, he must realize the pervasion on the basis of its example. This means that if a syllogism is a correct

sylllogism, its subject and example must both satisfy the predicate and the reason of the sylllogism.

In case of the three syllogisms, if their predicate were “being preceded by a permanent awareness” the examples for each syllogism would have to satisfy that predicate. This means that if the predicate of the three syllogisms were to refer to “being preceded by a permanent awareness” an axe, a vase, and a battle-axe would have to be “preceded by a permanent awareness”.

However, as Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* (“it would follow that the **examples** of these syllogisms **are not established**, because a permanent functioning thing is impossible.”) it is impossible for the three examples to be preceded by a permanent awareness because if they were preceded by such an awareness, an axe, a vase, and a battle-axe would be permanent functioning things. The three examples would be permanent functioning things because they would be (a) preceded by the *permanent* awareness of a creator and because they (b) act intermittently, have a specific shape or are able to perform a function.

The examples would be *functioning things* – and thus impermanent – because they act intermittently, have a specific shape, or are able to perform a function. At the same time, the examples would be *permanent*, because they would be the result of something that is permanent. They would be the result of something that is permanent because they would be the result of a *permanent* awareness.

However, there are no permanent functioning things because whatever is a functioning thing is necessarily impermanent, while permanent and impermanent are directly contradictory. Permanent and impermanent are directly contradictory because whatever is impermanent necessarily changes moment by moment, whereas whatever is permanent does *not* change moment by moment.

[Dharmakīrti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Alternatively, it leaves doubt*

Alternatively, if [the opponent’s syllogisms] were merely to establish that [abodes, bodies, and enjoyments] are preceded by another creator, it would follow that the pervasion was not ascertained, because, since God would not be ascertained, the pervasion would leave doubt.

The third debate is:

Alternatively, if the opponent were to assert that the predicate of the three syllogisms is “to be preceded by *another* creator”, the syllogisms would also be incorrect. The syllogisms would be incorrect because the pervasion of the syllogisms could not be ascertained or realized.

If the predicate of the three syllogisms were: “to be preceded by another creator”, the pervasion of the first syllogism would be: “whatever acts intermittently is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator”, the pervasion of the second syllogism: “whatever has a specific shape is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator”; and the pervasion of the third syllogism: “whatever is able to perform a function is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator”.

As mentioned before, if a syllogism is correct, the defendant must have ascertained or realized the pervasion of the syllogism. Therefore, the defendant of the first syllogism, for instance, would have realized that “whatever acts intermittently is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator”. However, this could not be realized because the pervasion of the first syllogism would leave doubt with regard to God.

In other words, there is no certainty that whatever or whoever acts intermittently is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator. There is no such certainty because even though God acts intermittently there is doubt as to whether God is preceded by the awareness of another creator. There is doubt as to whether God is

preceded by the awareness of another creator, for there is doubt as to whether God was *created* by another creator.

Furthermore, if the predicate of the three syllogisms were: “to be preceded by the awareness of another creator”, it would lead to an infinite regress, because just as God would be created by another creator, the creator of God would also be created by another creator, and so forth. If that were the case, God would neither be self-arisen nor the creator of everything. He would not be the creator of everything, for he would be unable to create himself, the being who created him, and so forth.

If you say it is not established that God acts intermittently, [we reply that] since we see that the results occur in sequence, it is established that the direct causes of those [results] must [occur] sequentially.

If the opponent were to respond to our own system’s third debate by claiming that God does not act intermittently (and thus that God is not preceded by the awareness of another creator), our own system’s response would be as follows:

If hypothetically God were the creator of worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments (as asserted by the opponent), God would act intermittently because he would create the direct causes of worldly abodes, etc. sequentially. He would create the direct causes of worldly abodes, etc. sequentially because we can see that the results of those causes (*i.e.*, worldly abodes, etc.) arise in sequence. If the results, worldly abodes etc. arise in sequence, the causes of those results must also arise in sequence. If the causes arise in sequence (and if they were created by God), God would necessarily act intermittently because there would be times when God creates those causes and times when he does not create those causes.

Unless one analyzes the predicate, it is impossible to apply the fault of being all three [types of] wrong [syllogism] simultaneously to one syllogism.

There are three types of wrong syllogisms. A wrong syllogism is a syllogism that is logically incorrect and does not satisfy the three modes of a correct reason (the three modes are explained below).

Our own system points out that even though the three syllogisms mentioned above are wrong syllogisms, it is not possible for each of those three to be all three types of wrong syllogism at the same time. This is because a wrong syllogism can only be *one* of the three types of wrong syllogism.

The three types of wrong syllogism are:

1. Syllogisms of contradiction (*gal ba'i gtan tshigs*)
2. Syllogisms of non-establishment (*ma grub pa'i gtan tshigs*)
3. Syllogisms of non-ascertainment (*ma nges pa'i gtan tshigs*)

Yet if one were to analyze and interpret the predicate of the three syllogisms in the three ways described above, the three syllogisms would satisfy the conditions for each of the three types of wrong syllogism.

This is because (1) if the predicate of the three syllogisms were: “preceded by an awareness”, the syllogisms would be *syllogisms of non-establishment*; (2) if the predicate were: “preceded by the permanent awareness of a creator”, the three syllogisms would be *syllogisms of contradiction*; and (3) if the predicate were: “preceded by the awareness of another creator”, the three syllogisms would be *syllogisms of non-ascertainment*.

As mentioned before, for a syllogism to be logically correct, its reason must have three qualities. These qualities are referred to as the “three modes of a correct reason”. The three modes are:

- a) The property of the subject

- b) The forward pervasion
- c) The counter-pervasion

Taking the example of the following correct syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments, they are impermanent because they are a product of their own causes and conditions. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame.*

“Worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments” are the subject, “impermanent” the predicate, “being a product of their own causes and conditions” the reason, and “the last moment of a candle flame” the example.

This correct syllogism satisfies the first mode of the reason, the *property of the subject*, because its defendant is someone who has not yet realized the thesis but *wishes* to realize it (i.e., wishes to realize that “worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments, are impermanent”) and has realized the *presence of the reason in the subject*. He has realized the *presence of the reason in the subject*, because he has realized that the subject, worldly abodes, etc. *are* products of their own causes and conditions.

The syllogism satisfies the second mode of the reason, the *forward pervasion*, because its defendant has realized the pervasion of the syllogism on the basis of the example. The defendant has realized that whatever is a product of its own causes and conditions is necessarily impermanent, on the basis of the last moment of a candle flame. This means in general, that the defendant has realized that since the last moment of a candle flame is a product of its own causes and conditions, the last moment of a candle flame is necessarily impermanent. Realizing this means to realize that the last moment of a candle flame is both impermanent and a product of its own causes and conditions.

The syllogism satisfies the third mode of the reason, the *counter-pervasion*, because its defendant has realized the *counter-pervasion* of the syllogism on the basis of the example, the last moment of a candle flame. The *counter-pervasion* of the syllogism is: “whatever is not impermanent is necessarily not a product of its own causes and conditions.” What the defendant has realized is that if the last moment of a candle flame were not impermanent, it could not be the product of its own causes and conditions.

Returning to the above-mentioned three syllogisms (cited by an opponent in order to establish that worldly abodes, etc. are created by God), none of the syllogisms are all three types of wrong syllogisms.

However, if the predicate of the three syllogisms were: “preceded by an awareness”, the syllogisms would be *syllogisms of non-establishment*. In the case of the first syllogism (*Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments, they are preceded by an awareness, because they act intermittently*), it would be a *syllogism of non-establishment*, because it would be a syllogism that does not satisfy the first mode of a correct reason, the *property of the subject*.

If the predicate of the first syllogism were: “preceded by an awareness” the first syllogism would not satisfy the first mode of a reason (the *property of the subject*), because the defendant would not be someone who has not yet realized the thesis but *wishes* to realize it (i.e., that “worldly abodes etc. are preceded by an awareness”). The defendant would not be someone who has not yet realized the thesis, because, as mentioned above, the defendants of that syllogism are Buddhists, and Buddhists have already realized the thesis. They have already realized the thesis because they have realized that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by an awareness. Buddhists have realized that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by an awareness because they have realized that worldly abodes are preceded by *karma that is volition*.

Furthermore, if the predicate of the three syllogisms were: “preceded by the permanent awareness of a creator”, the syllogisms would be *syllogisms of contradiction*. Taking the

example of the first syllogism: it would be a *syllogism of contradiction* because, although it satisfies the first mode (the property of the subject), whatever satisfies the reason of that syllogism (“to act intermittently”) necessarily contradicts the predicate (“to be preceded by the permanent awareness of a creator”). Whatever satisfies the reason of the syllogism necessarily contradicts the predicate, because whatever satisfies the reason necessarily does *not* satisfy the predicate. This is because whatever acts intermittently is necessarily *not* preceded by the permanent awareness of a creator.

Please note that in general, there are two main ways in which the pervasion of a syllogism can be flawed. These two ways are:

Whatever satisfies the reason does *not necessarily* satisfy the predicate

Whatever satisfies the reason *necessarily does not* satisfy the predicate

An example of an incorrect syllogism with a flawed pervasion of the first type is:

*Regarding the subject, selflessness, it is impermanent, because it exists.*

The subject of this syllogism is “selflessness”, the predicate is “to be impermanent”, and the reason is “to exist”.

The pervasion of the syllogism is: “whatever exists is not necessarily impermanent”. The pervasion is logically flawed because a permanent phenomenon, such as selflessness, satisfies the reason (since selflessness exists) but does not satisfy the predicate (since selflessness is *not* impermanent). But the pervasion is not of the second type because it would not be correct to say that “whatever exists is *necessarily not* impermanent”. This is because there are phenomena, such as the mind, that exist *and* are impermanent.

An example of an incorrect syllogism with a flawed pervasion of the second type is:

*Regarding the subject, a vase, it is non-existent, because it is impermanent.*

The subject of this syllogism is “a vase”, the predicate is “to be non-existent”, and the reason is “to be impermanent”.

The pervasion is “whatever is impermanent is necessarily non-existent”. The pervasion is logically flawed, because it is a *reverse pervasion*. It is a *reverse pervasion* because whatever satisfies the reason (“to be impermanent”) necessarily satisfies the opposite of the predicate (“to be non-existent”). It satisfies the opposite of the predicate because whatever is impermanent is *necessarily not* non-existent. Whatever is impermanent is necessarily not non-existent because whatever is impermanent is necessarily existent.

Similarly, if the predicate of the three syllogisms were: “preceded by the permanent awareness of a creator”, the pervasions of the three syllogisms would be *reverse pervasions* and the syllogisms would be *syllogisms of contradiction*. As mentioned before, taking the example of the first syllogism, its pervasion would be a reverse pervasion, because whatever satisfies the reason necessarily stands in contradiction to the predicate. Whatever satisfies the reason necessarily stands in contradiction to the predicate, because whatever acts intermittently is necessarily *not* preceded by the permanent awareness of a creator.

Lastly, if the predicate of the three syllogisms were: “preceded by the awareness of another creator”, the syllogisms would be *syllogisms of non-ascertainment*. They would be *syllogisms of non-ascertainment* because, although they would satisfy the first mode (the property of the subject) they would possess neither a correct pervasion nor a pervasion of contradiction.

Taking the example of the first syllogism, if the predicate were: “preceded by the awareness of another creator”, the syllogism would not possess a pervasion of contradiction because it is not correct to assert that whatever acts intermittently is necessarily not preceded by the awareness of another creator. It is not correct to assert that whatever acts intermittently is necessarily not preceded by the awareness of

another creator because there are phenomena that act intermittently and are preceded by the awareness of another creator.

Also, if the predicate of the first syllogism were: “preceded by the awareness of another creator”, the syllogism would not possess a correct pervasion, because, as mentioned before, it is not certain that whatever satisfies the reason of the syllogism necessarily satisfies the predicate. It is not certain that whatever satisfies the reason necessarily satisfies the predicate, because is it not certain that whatever (or whoever) acts intermittently is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator. This was explained above.

In brief, in this outline an opponent cites three syllogisms in order to prove to Buddhists that the different realms of this world, sentient beings’ bodies, and sense objects such as colors, shapes, sounds, etc. are the products of a creator God. The subject and predicate of those syllogisms are the same. The subject is “worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments” and the predicate “they are preceded by the awareness of a creator”. The reason of the first syllogism is “because they act intermittently”, the reason of the second syllogism “because they have a specific shape”, and the reason of the third syllogism “because they are able to perform a function” ([*The reason*] *such as they act intermittently, have a specific shape / Perform a function, and so forth*).

In response our own system examines the predicate of the three syllogisms, presenting three different possibilities for the meaning of “being preceded by the awareness of a creator”:

- (a) If the predicate were to mean that “worldly abodes, etc. are preceded merely by an awareness”, the three syllogisms would not be correct because the syllogisms are directed towards Buddhists and would establish something which has already been realized and thus accepted by Buddhists. They would establish something that is accepted by Buddhists because they would establish that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by an awareness. Buddhists assert that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by an awareness because they assert that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by *karma of volition*, which is an awareness. (*“Either they establish the accepted...”*)
- (b) If the predicate were to mean that “worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by a *permanent* awareness”, the three syllogisms would not be correct because there would not be any examples on the basis of which the defendants would realize the pervasion of each syllogism. There would not be any examples because the example of a syllogism must be an object that satisfies both the predicate and the reason. In other words, if the predicate of the three syllogism were to be “preceded by a permanent awareness”, the example of the first syllogism would be an object that “is preceded by a permanent awareness” and “acts intermittently”, the example of the second syllogism would be an object that “is preceded by a permanent phenomenon” and “has a specific shape”, and so forth. However, since there is no object that is preceded by a permanent consciousness, there would not be any examples of the three syllogisms (*...or the example is not established,*).
- (c) Alternatively, if the predicate were to mean that “worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by the awareness of another creator”, the three syllogisms would not be correct because the defendants would not be able to realize the pervasion of the syllogisms. They would not be able to realize the pervasion of the syllogisms because they would not be able to realize that “whatever acts intermittently is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator”; they would not be able to realize that “that whatever has a specific shape is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator”; and they would not be able to realize that “whatever is able to perform a function is necessarily preceded by the awareness of another creator”. The defendants would not be able to realize any of those pervasions because they would have doubts whether God himself – who acts intermittently, has a specific shape, and is able to perform a function – is preceded by the awareness of another creator. (*“Alternatively, it leaves doubt”*)

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What are the three syllogisms cited by an opponent in order to establish a creator God?
2. What do worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments refer to?
3. Are the predicates of the three syllogisms the same or different?
4. What does it mean "to act intermittently", "to have a specific shape", and "to perform a function"?
5. What is the thesis of each of the three syllogisms?
6. Why does the opponent assert that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are created by God?
7. Who are the defendants of the three syllogisms?
8. What would be the fault if the predicate of the three syllogisms were to be: "preceded by an awareness"?
9. What is the difference between (1) karma that is volition and (2) volitional karma?
10. What would be the fault if the predicate of the three syllogisms were to be: "preceded by a permanent awareness"?
11. Why is there no permanent functioning thing?
12. What would be the fault if the predicate of the three syllogisms were to be: "preceded by another creator"?
13. What would be the fault if one were to assert that God does not act intermittently?
14. What are the three types of wrong syllogisms? How do they differ from one another?
15. Why would the three syllogisms be syllogisms of non-establishment if their predicate were to be: "preceded by an awareness"?
16. Why would the three syllogisms be syllogisms of contradiction if their predicate were to be: "preceded by a permanent awareness"?
17. Why would the three syllogisms be syllogisms of non-ascertainment if their predicate were to be: "preceded by another creator"?

## AN EXTENSIVE EXPLANATION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation through an analysis of the meaning of [the words used to express] the proof
- (2) Refuting other types [of arguments] through that
- (3) The objective that is accomplished by those [refutations]

## REFUTATION THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF THE MEANING OF [THE WORDS USED TO EXPRESS] THE PROOF

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The meaning of shape is unsuitable as a reason
- (2) The word "shape" is unsuitable as a reason

Having previously examined the *predicate* of the three syllogisms, our own system proceeds to examine the *proofs* or *reasons* of those syllogisms. In particular, our own

system investigates the reason of the second syllogism. As cited above, the second syllogism is:

*Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because they have a specific shape. For instance, like a vase.*

The reason of the second syllogism is, “because they have a specific shape”.

Please note that the proof (*sgrub byed*) of a syllogism and the reason (*rtags*) of a syllogism are equivalent.

## THE MEANING OF SHAPE IS UNSUITABLE AS A REASON

[This is divided into:]

(1) [If] a specific shape is [cited as the] reason, the property of the subject is not established

(2) [If] a mere shape [is cited as the reason, the pervasion is] not ascertained

In these outlines our own system presents the reasons why the meaning of ‘shape’, *i.e.*, shape itself (as opposed to ) is not able to establish that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of a creator.

## [IF] A SPECIFIC SHAPE IS [CITED AS] THE REASON THE PROPERTY OF THE SUBJECT IS NOT ESTABLISHED

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Determined by the presence or absence of blessings,  
Established the way a shape, etc. is,  
That which is inferred from that  
Is reasonable.*

Regarding the subject, a shaped [object], etc. that is **determined by the presence or absence of** its benefactor/assistant, a being who bestows **blessings** on [the object], it follows that it is not a correct reason establishing that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of [such] a being, because if [worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments] were **established the way** vases, etc. are, **that which is inferred from** [the reason: “because it has a specific shape”] would be **reasonable**. However, [since worldly abodes, etc. are not established the way vases, etc. are] the property of the subject is not established.

“A shaped object that is determined by the presence or absence of its benefactor/assistant, a being who bestows blessing (*byin gyis rlob pa*) on the object” refers to a shaped object that is designed or made by someone.

In Tibetan, *an assistant* (*phan bye*) – or *that which provides benefits/assistance* – is another term for ‘cause’. A cause is a *benefactor/an assistant*, or *that which provides benefit/assistance*, because it contributes to the arising of a result.

The Tibetan term “*byin gyis rlob pa*” is usually translated as “to bestow blessing”, “to bless”, “to consecrate” etc. However, since “*byin*” means “magnificence”, “splendor”, “glory”, etc. while “*rlob pa*” means “to change” or “to transform”, “*byin gyis rlob pa*” can be translated as “to transform into magnificence” or “to transform into greatness”. Yet, here in this context it also means “to create”, “to generate”, or “to produce”. Therefore, “a being who bestows blessings on the object” refers to the person who designs or makes the object.

A vase, for instance, is “determined by the presence or absence of its benefactor, a being who bestows blessings on the object” because a vase ‘*has arisen through effort*’ (*rtsol byung*). A vase *has arisen through effort* because the existence of a vase is dependent on



the effort of the person who designs or makes the vase. Thus, the existence of the vase is determined by or dependent on the presence or absence of its cause, the person creating the vase.

As mentioned before, here our own system examines the above-cited second syllogism (*“Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because they have a specific shape. For instance, like a vase.”*). In particular, our own system examines the syllogism’s reason: “because they have a specific shape”.

Since, as mentioned above, “having a specific shape” refers to being a shaped object that is designed or made by someone (*i.e.*, to “being determined by the presence or absence of its benefactor, a being who bestows blessings on the object”) the second syllogism does not satisfy the first mode of the reason, the *property of the subject*. The second syllogism does not satisfy the *property of the subject*, because worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments do not have a specific shape. They do not have a specific shape because they are not shaped objects that are designed or made by someone.

Yet, argues our own system, if the subject of the second syllogism (worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments) *were* to be objects that are established or brought into existence the way vases are – in that they *have arisen through effort* and are therefore “determined by the presence or absence of its benefactor, a being who bestows blessing on the object” – the second syllogism would be a correct syllogism. It would be a correct syllogism because in dependence on its reason, “having a specific shape”, it would be reasonable to establish that worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of a creator (in the same way as it is possible to establish in dependence on the reason “having a specific shape” that a vase is preceded by the awareness of a creator). Hence, in dependence on the reason, “having a specific shape” one would be able to infer or realize that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of a creator. This is expressed by Gyaltsab Je in the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*: “if [worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments] were **established the way** vases, etc. are, **that which is inferred from** [the reason: “because it has a specific shape”] would be **reasonable**”.

However, unlike a vase, worldly abodes, etc. are not man-made objects but occur naturally, which is why the syllogism does not satisfy the first mode of the reason (the *property of the subject*).

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What does “a being who bestows blessings on the object” refer to?
2. What does “a shaped object that is determined by the presence or absence of a beneficial being who bestows blessing on the object” refer to?
3. What does it mean for an object to “*have arisen through effort*”?
4. Which of the three syllogisms does Dharmakirti examine in this outline?
5. If the meaning of “having a specific shape” were to be: “a shaped object that is created by someone”, would the following syllogism be a correct syllogism: “*Regarding the subject, a vase, it is preceded by the awareness of a creator because it has a specific shape*”?

## [IF] A MERE SHAPE [IS CITED AS THE REASON THE PERVASION IS] NOT ASCERTAINED

[This is divided into:]

- (1) An example of non-ascertainment

- (2) The logical absurdity if [the pervasion is] ascertained
- (3) Eliminating [the objection of a] rebounding argument

## AN EXAMPLE OF NON-ASCERTAINMENT

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*It is established that they are entities [generated by] different [causes]  
On account of the word being similar – not different,  
It is not reasonable to infer [from this the creation by God]  
Like [inferring] fire from a grey substance.*

It is not reasonable to infer from the reason: “because [their shape and] the shape of a vase are not different[from the point of view of] being a mere shape”, that [worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments] are made by a living-being, because **it is established that** the shapes of those [worldly abodes etc.] are generated as **entities** that have **different** kinds of **causes** than the shapes made by a living-being. [The shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase] are **not different**[from the point of view of]being a mere shape, because they are **similar** in that one can apply to both the word “shape”. For instance, it is **like** inferring **fire from a grey substance** on the basis of [the grey substance’s] presence.

Our own system continues the analysis of the three syllogisms by arguing that if for the second syllogism one were to cite the reason “because the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are not different from being a mere shape”, one would not be able to establish, and thus infer (in dependence on such a reason) that worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of a creator.

In other words, if the second syllogism were to be: “*Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because their shape and the shape of a vase (which is preceded by the awareness of a creator) are not different from being a mere shape*”, the pervasion of the syllogism could not be ascertained.

Here, the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are said to be not different from the point of view of being mere shapes, because both the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are called “shape”. Therefore, they are similar (*i.e.*, not different) from the point of view of being called “shape”. Gyaltsab Je says in the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*: [The shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase] are **not different**[from the point of view of]being a mere shape, because they are **similar** in that one can apply to both the word “shape”.

However, even though the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are similar from the point of view of being mere shapes or from being called “shape”, this does not mean that the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are similar from the point of view of being preceded by the awareness of a creator. The shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are different from that point of view, because the shape of a vase is made by a person and thus has different causes than the shape of worldly abodes, etc.

This means that the shape of a vase and the shape of worldly abodes, etc. are not the same from the point of view of being preceded by the same causes – for instance, by the awareness of a creator. This is explained by Gyaltsab Je when he says: “because **it is established that** the shapes of those [worldly abodes etc.] are generated as **entities** that have **different** kinds of **causes** than the shapes made by a living being.”

Therefore, in dependence on the reason “because the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are not different from being a mere shape”, it is not possible to ascertain that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by the awareness of a creator.

Trying to ascertain that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by the awareness of a creator in dependence on such a reason is similar to the following example: Perceiving a grey substance (e.g. a grey cloud) on a mountain and wrongly inferring in dependence on the presence of such a substance that there is a fire on the mountain.

This means that one wrongly concludes there is fire on the mountain in reliance on the following syllogism: “*Regarding the subject, on the mountain, there is fire, because the grey substance that is present on the mountain and smoke are not different from the point of view of being grey in color*”.

One wrongly concludes there is fire because one understands that the grey substance that is present on the mountain and smoke are similar from the point of view of being grey in color. Understanding this, one wrongly concludes that the grey substance that is present on the mountain and smoke are also similar from the point of view of being preceded by fire. Consequently one wrongly infers that there is fire because one perceives a grey substance, and wrongly believes that just as smoke is necessarily preceded by fire, the grey substance must also be preceded by fire. Gyalsab says: “For instance, it is **like** inferring **fire from a grey substance** on the basis of [the grey’s substance’s] presence.”

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the wrong syllogism cited in this outline?
2. Why is that syllogism a wrong syllogism?
3. Why are the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase described as not being different?
4. Are the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase different?
5. What is the example in this outline?

## THE LOGICAL ABSURDITY IF [THE PERVASION IS] ASCERTAINED

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If that were not so: because a vase, etc.  
Is a manifestation of some clay,  
Created by a potter,  
An ant-hill would also be created by [a potter]*

**If that were not so, an ant-hill would also be created by a potter, because a [clay] vase, etc. that is created by a potter is similar [to the ant-hill by virtue of] being a manifestation of some clay.**

If that were not so, *i.e.*, if it were not the case that the pervasion of the syllogism cited in the previous outline cannot be ascertained, the following logical absurdity would occur: an ant-hill (that is made out of clay) would have to have been created by a potter because a clay vase and an ant-hill are similar from the point of view of being made out of clay.

In other words, if one were to assert that the above-cited reason “because the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are not different from being a mere shape” is a correct reason, a clay ant-hill would have to have been made by a potter. The clay

ant-hill would be made by a potter because the clay ant-hill and the clay vase would be similar from the point of view of being made by a potter. They would be similar from the point of view of being made by a potter because the ant-hill and the vase are similar from the point of view of being made out of clay.

## ELIMINATING [THE OBJECTION OF A] REBOUNDED ARGUMENT

[Someone:] Having analysed [the second syllogism's] reason in general and its specifics, your objections are a flawed refutation of the same result (*i.e.*, a rebounded argument), since your analysis is equally [applicable to] the proofs you accept.

Here, an opponent objects to our own system's analysis of the reason of the second syllogism ("because they have a specific shape"). The analysis to which the opponent refers was presented above in the following outlines:

(1) [If] a specific shape is [cited as the] reason, the property of the subject is not established

(2) [If] a mere shape [is cited as the reason, the pervasion] is not ascertained

In those two outlines, our own system analyses (1) "having a specific shape" and (2) "having a shape" in general.

In the first outline (or more specifically, in the sub-outline: "An example of non-ascertainment"), our own system examines the reason: "having a specific shape". Our own system argues that since "having a specific shape" refers to being a shaped object that is designed or made by someone (*i.e.*, "being determined by the presence or absence of a beneficial being who bestows blessings on the object") the second syllogism's property of the subject is not established.

In the second outline ([If] a mere shape [is cited as the reason, the pervasion] is not ascertained), our own system analyses "having a shape" in general, *i.e.*, "having a mere shape". Our own system analyses "having a mere shape", for it analyses the reason: "because the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of a vase are not different from the point of view of being a mere shape". Our own system concludes that if that were the reason of the second syllogism, the pervasion of the syllogism could not be ascertained.

According to the opponent, our own system's analysis and its objection to the reason of the second syllogism in those two outlines constitutes a *rebounded argument* (or literally: *a flawed refutation of the same result*, 'bras mtshungs kyi ltag chod).

A *rebounded argument* refers to a flawed objection to a syllogism after having analysed the syllogism (in this case having analysed the reason of the syllogism). It is a *rebounded argument*, for it rebounds or backfires in the sense that the logical faults one expresses with regard to that syllogism can also be applied to one's own syllogisms. This is explained in more detail below.

In his *Compendium of Pramana* (*Pramana-samuccaya*; *tshad ma kun btus*) Dignaga describes fourteen types of *flawed refutations* (*ltag chod*), including the rebounded argument – or *flawed refutation of the same result*.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since it is pervaded by the predicate*

*The general [reason] establishes a result.*

*Owing to different [objects] that are related,*

*Objecting to something different is asserted to be the same result.*

[Response:] [Our analysis] is not equally [applicable to the proofs we accept] because a flawed refutation of the same result (*i.e.*, a rebounding argument) refers to someone challenging a general reason able to establish a thesis, by analyzing the specifics [of the reason], with the faults which that challenger [presents] also applying to his own proofs.

However, it does not become a flawed refutation of the same result when expressing objections [directed at] a wrong proof.

In response, our own system says that our analysis and objection to the reason of the second syllogism are not equally applicable to the syllogisms cited by our own system, because the objections are not a *flawed refutation of a similar result*, *i.e.*, a rebounding argument. They are not a rebounding argument, for a rebounding argument refers to challenging and objecting to a correct syllogism (*i.e.*, a syllogism the reason of which is able to establish the thesis) by engaging in a flawed analysis and objections to the specifics (or instances) of the reason. This flawed objection rebounds or backfires in that the faults adduced by the challenger also apply to the proofs or reasons he considers to be correct reasons.

Our own system's analysis and objection to the reason of the second syllogism is not a rebounding argument because, as explained before, the reason of the second syllogism is a *wrong* proof.

An example of a rebounding argument is when someone, based on the correct syllogism: "*Regarding the subject, John, he is selfless, because he is impermanent. For instance, like Tashi*", engages in the following mistaken analysis and refutation of the reason, ("he is impermanent"):

*If "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of John", the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion.*

*If "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of Tashi", the syllogism would not satisfy the property of the subject.*

*Therefore, this is not a correct syllogism, for the reason is not correct. The reason is not correct because it does not satisfy the three modes of a correct reason. The reason does not satisfy the three modes of a correct reason because, either the reason does not satisfy the forward pervasion, or it does not satisfy the property of the subject.*

Our own system agrees that if "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of John", the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion.<sup>21</sup>

Likewise, our own system agrees that if "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of Tashi", the syllogism would not satisfy the property of the subject.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>If "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of John" (*i.e.*, John's quality of being impermanent"), the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion because, as mentioned before, in order for a syllogism to satisfy the forward pervasion the defendant must realize the syllogism's pervasion on the basis of the example. This means that in order for the above-cited correct syllogism to satisfy the forward pervasion, the defendant must realise that if Tashi, the example, is impermanent he is necessarily selfless. Realizing this is only possible if Tashi satisfies both the predicate and the reason. In other words, realizing this is only possible if Tashi is the common locus of "being selfless" (the predicate) and "being impermanent" (the reason), *i.e.*, if Tashi is both selfless and impermanent.

However, if – as the person engaging in the flawed analysis suggests – the reason of the syllogism ("being impermanent") were to refer to "being the impermanence of John", the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion. It would not satisfy the forward pervasion because it would not be possible to realize the syllogism's pervasion on the basis of the example. It would not be possible to realize the pervasion on the basis of the example, because Tashi is not a common locus of the predicate, "being selfless" and the reason "being the impermanence of John". Tashi is not the common locus of those two, because Tashi is not 'the impermanence of John'.

<sup>22</sup>If "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of Tashi", the syllogism would not satisfy the property of the subject, because for a reason to satisfy the property of the subject, the subject must satisfy the reason. In case of the above-cited correct syllogism, the reason satisfies the property of the subject because John satisfies the reason. John satisfies the reason because he is impermanent.

However, the analysis and objection by the person who presents that rebounding argument are flawed, since the reason of the syllogism is “impermanent” in general; it is neither “the impermanence of John” nor “the impermanence of Tashi”.

Therefore, in order to check whether a reason is correct or not, one needs to analyze *thethree modes of the reason*, not some of the specifics or instances of that reason.

If it were acceptable to analyse the specifics or instances of a reason when checking whether the reason is correct, the analysis would backfire. It would backfire because the person who engaged in such analysis would not be able to cite a correct syllogism; he would be unable to cite a correct reason establishing, for instance, that “John is impermanent”. This is because when one engaged in the same kind of analysis of the specifics or instances of any reason he cited, one would also find fault with that reason. One would find fault, for even though a general phenomenon may serve to establish a thesis and thus be a correct reason, this does not mean that the specifics or instances of that phenomenon are able to establish that thesis.

Someone having cited the reason “arisen through effort” in order to establish that “the sound of a conch-shell is impermanent”, someone [else] argues: “If you were to cite as a reason, “[because the sound of a conch-shell] exists prior to the effort [and will later] reveal itself”, [the pervasion] could not be ascertained. If you were to cite, “[because the sound of a conch-shell] has arisen newly without having existed prior to [the effort]”, [the reason] would not be established.”

Here, Gyaltsab Je gives an example of a rebounding argument. Based on the following correct syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the sound of a conch-shell, it is a result, because it has arisen through effort*, someone engages in a mistaken analysis of and objection to that syllogism by arguing:

*If the reason, “it has arisen through effort”, were to refer to: “it exists prior to the effort and later reveals itself”, the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion.*

*If “it has arisen through effort” were to refer to: “it has arisen newly without having existed prior to the effort”, the syllogism would not satisfy the property of the subject.*

*Hence, this is not a correct syllogism, for the reason is not correct. The reason is not correct because it does not satisfy the three modes of a correct reason. The reason does not satisfy the three modes of a correct reason because either the reason does not satisfy the forward pervasion or it does not satisfy the property of the subject.*

In order to fully understand the statements made as part of that rebounding argument it is important to know (as Gyaltsab Je mentions below) that the correct syllogism, “*Regarding the subject, the sound of a conch-shell, it is a result, because it has arisen through effort*” was cited by a follower of the non-Buddhist philosopher Akshipada – a Samkhya. The rebounding argument was made by a non-Buddhist Naiyayika<sup>23</sup>.

According to Jangya Rolbay Dorje’s *Presentation of Tenets*<sup>24</sup>, followers of Akshipada

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Yet, if, according to the person engaging in the flawed analysis, the reason of the syllogism were “the impermanence of Tashi”, the property of the subject would not be established, because John is not “the impermanence of Tashi”.

<sup>23</sup>For a presentation of the tenets of the non-Buddhist Naiyayikas (i.e., followers of the non-Buddhist Nyaya School of logic) see Jeffrey Hopkin’s *Cutting Through Appearances* [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p.155-158 and *Maps of the Profound* [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 151-176

<sup>24</sup>Jangya Rolbay Dorje (1717-1786) was a great Mongolian scholar and adept who was born in the Amdo province of Tibet, north of Dzongka. Over his life he composed approximately two hundred works in eight volumes, among which the longest, his philosophical masterpiece, is *A Presentation of Tenets, Beautiful Ornament for the Heap of the Subduer’s Teachings (grub mtha’ thub bstan lhun po’i mdzes rgyan)*, more commonly referred to as *Presentation of Tenets*. In the Gelugpa tradition this text is considered one of the essential texts on Buddhist and non-Buddhist tenet schools. The translation of the section on

(*rkang mig pa*) can be classified into three types of non-Buddhist philosophers who revere Ishvara as creator God: (1) the Samkhyas (*grang can pa*) who revere Ishvara, (2) the Vaisheshikas (*bye brag pa*) who revere Ishvara, and (3) the Naiyayikas (*rigs pa can pa*) who revere Ishvara.

Here, the follower of Akshipada who cited the correct syllogism (“*Regarding the subject, the sound of a conch-shell, it is a result, because it has arisen through effort*”) is a Samkhya.

One of the unique tenets of the followers of the Samkhya School<sup>25</sup> is that a result or effect exists at the time of its cause. It exists at the time of its cause in a non-manifest or unrevealed form, without being a result or effect at that time. Later, when its cause has ceased, it becomes manifest.

According to the Samkhya School, a sprout, for instance, exists at the time of its cause, the seed. Yet at the time of the seed, the sprout exists in a non-manifest form without being a result of the seed, for it has not yet revealed itself as a sprout. It reveals itself when, owing to conditions such as water, warmth, etc. it becomes the resultant sprout and when its cause, the seed, has ceased.

Not only does the sprout exist at the time of the seed, it also exists prior to the seed because the seed is preceded by other causes of the sprout, such as the plant that produced the seed.<sup>26</sup>

Returning to Gyaltsab Je’s example of a rebounding argument, the Naiyayika who presents the rebounding argument by engaging in a flawed refutation of the above-cited syllogism analyses some specifics of the reason and concludes that from the point of view of the follower of Akshipada – the Samkhya – the syllogism is flawed.

The Naiyayika concludes that from the point of view of the Samkhya the syllogism is flawed, because if the reason, “it has arisen through effort”, were to mean: “it exists prior to the effort and will later reveal itself” the followers of the Samkhya School would assert that the syllogism does not satisfy the forward pervasion.

According to the Samkhya School, the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion, for “if something exists prior to its cause – the effort – and later reveals itself, it is not necessarily a result”.

For instance, the sound of a conch-shell that exists in a non-manifest form prior to the effort (*i.e.*, at the time of another one of its causes that precedes the effort): such a sound satisfies the reason but not the predicate.

The sound of a conch-shell that exists in a non-manifest form prior to the effort does not satisfy the predicate, for it has not yet revealed itself and thus is not a result.<sup>27</sup>

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the Sautrantika School is available in Anne Klein’s **Knowing, Naming, and Negation** and the section on the Madhyamika Prasangika School, in Jeffrey Hopkins’ *Emptiness Yoga*.

<sup>25</sup>For a more extensive presentation of the tenets of the Samkhya School, see Jeffrey Hopkins’ *Cutting Through Appearances* [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p.155-158 and *Maps of the Profound* [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 151-176

<sup>26</sup>Causes can be classified into two: (a) direct and (b) indirect causes. Direct causes generate their results directly, in the sense that the moment a direct cause has ceased (*i.e.*, gone out of existence) its direct result has been generated (*i.e.*, come into existence). Fire being the direct cause of its result, smoke, is an example of a direct cause. Fire directly gives rise to smoke because the moment when fire has ceased marks the moment when smoke has come into existence. There is no other phenomenon that exists after fire has ceased and before smoke has been generated.

Firewood, on the other hand, is the indirect cause of smoke, for it indirectly gives rise to the smoke. This means that the two, firewood-ceasing-to-exist and smoke-coming-into-existence, are not simultaneous, for fire exists after the firewood has ceased and before smoke has come into existence. Hence, firewood is the direct cause of fire and the indirect cause of smoke.

According to the Samkhya School, however, smoke exists not only during its direct cause, the fire, it also exists prior to the fire, at the time of its indirect cause, the firewood.

Furthermore, the Naiyayika argues that if the reason, “it has arisen through effort”, were to refer to “it has arisen newly without having existed prior to the effort”, the followers of the Samkhya School would assert that the property of the subject is not established.

According to the Samkhya School, the property of the subject would not be established because the sound of conch-shell does not satisfy the reason. The sound of a conch-shell does not satisfy the reason, for it has not arisen newly without having existed prior to the effort. The sound of a conch-shell has not arisen newly without having existed prior to the effort, for it does exist prior to the effort. It exists prior to the effort, for it exists at the same time as another one of its causes that precedes the effort.

Therefore, the Naiyayika concludes that according to the Samkhya School, the syllogism is incorrect, because, either it does not satisfy the forward pervasion, or it does not satisfy the property of the subject.

It is reasonable to assert this to be a flawed refutation of **the same result** [*i.e.*, a rebounding argument] because that debate is a mistaken response, **objecting to something different**, having analysed different [objects] **that are related to the general** reason, “arisen through effort”, which is able to **establish** that the sound of a conch shell is **a result**.

The above-cited refutation is an example of a rebounding argument because it constitutes a flawed debate in response to a correct syllogism – a debate which objects to some specifics of the correct reason that was originally cited. Such objection takes place upon having analyzed the different specifics which, although they are related to the original reason, are nonetheless different from it. They are so different from it that even though the original reason, “it has arisen through effort”, is able to establish that the sound of a conch-shell is a result, the specifics the challenger examines are not.

The reason [“it has arisen through effort”] is able to establish the thesis [“the sound of the conch-shell is a result”] because the **pervasion of the predicate** and the property of the subject are established.

According to our own system (and the Samkhya School), the reason, “it has arisen through effort”, is a correct reason that is able to establish the thesis, “the sound of a conch-shell is a result”, because both the forward pervasion and the property of the subject are established.

In other words, the syllogism: “*Regarding the subject, the sound of a conch-shell, it is a result, because it has arisen through effort*”, is a correct syllogism because its reason is a correct reason and thus satisfies the three modes of a reason. The reason satisfies the three modes of a reason for it satisfies the first mode, the property of the subject, and the second mode, the forward pervasion.

It is not necessary to mention that the reason also satisfies the third mode, the counter-pervasion, because if a reason satisfies the first two modes it necessarily satisfies the third mode (and hence all three modes). This is because the forward pervasion and the counter-pervasion of a reason are equivalent.

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<sup>27</sup>Please note that according to the Samkhya School, although in general the sound of a conch-shell is the result of effort, for the sound of a conch-shell *has arisen through effort*, the sound of a conch-shell that exists in a non-manifest form prior to the effort is not the result of effort. It is not the result of effort since it does not exist subsequent to effort. Not only is it not the result of effort it is not a result in general.



Based on the syllogism that was cited by the follower of Akshipada, the Naiyayika sets forth an objection – having analysed the specifics [of the reason] – which the follower of Akshipada asserts to be a flawed refutation of the same result [*i.e.*, a rebounding argument]. Acharya [Dharmakirti] also asserts that [to be a rebounding argument].

Here Gyaltsab Je explains, as mentioned before, that the above-cited correct syllogism (*Regarding the subject, the sound of a conch-shell, it is a result, because it has arisen through effort*) was cited by a follower of the Akshipada and the refutation by a Naiyayika. Both the follower of Akshipada and Acharya Dharmakirti assert the refutation by the Naiyayika to be a rebounding argument.

The meaning of the term “*the same result*” is: When making “result” the predicate and citing only “it has arisen through effort” as the reason, someone presents a challenge [after] having analyzed the specifics [of the reason]. The same analysis of the proof the challenger himself presents [in order to establish that the sound of a conch-shell is a result] is applied to [the challenger who] analyses: “Regarding the proof that you present, is the sound of a conch-shell a result that does not exist prior to the effort but arises newly, or does it exist prior [to the effort and later] reveals itself?” In brief, the meaning is that this is called “*a flawed refutation that is the same with respect to the result*”.

Gyaltsab Je provides two explanations of the etymology or meaning of the term “*a flawed refutation of the same result*” – in particular, of the meaning of the term “*the same result*”.

In the first explanation, Gyaltsab Je sets forth the etymology of a slightly longer version of the original term; he expounds on the meaning of the term “*a flawed refutation that is the same with respect to the result*” (*bras bu dang mtshungs pa'i ltag chod*), which can be shortened to “*a flawed refutation of the same result*”. This explanation is based on the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the sound of a conch-shell, it is a result, because it has arisen through effort*.

As mentioned before, the challenger, the Naiyayika, who sets forth the rebounding argument, objects to the syllogism, having examined the specifics of the reason that establishes the predicate, “result” based on the subject “the sound of a conch-shell”.

However, the challenger himself is unable to cite a correct reason in order to establish “result” based on “the sound of a conch-shell”, because if the same analysis and objection set forth by the challenger were to be applied to the reason he himself cites (in order to establish that “the sound of a conch-shell is a result”), his syllogism would also be incorrect.

The challenger’s refutation rebounds or backfires, which is why it is called “*a flawed refutation that is the same with respect to the result*”. The challenger’s rebounding argument is *a flawed refutation that is the same with respect to the result* because it is a *flawed refutation* the faults of which are *the same with respect to* the challenger attempting to establish the predicate, “result”. In other words, when applying the same analysis to the reason the challenger himself cites in order to establish “result” on the basis of “the sound of a conch shell”, the reason will incur the same faults of not satisfying the forward pervasion and the property of the subject.

Since this explanation of the meaning of the term “*a flawed refutation that is the same with respect to the result*” is only applicable to a syllogism that establishes the predicate “result”, it does not apply to all rebounding arguments.

However, there is no fault in the meaning of this term not referring to all rebounding arguments, for here Gyaltsab Je does not provide an explanation of the meaning of the term’s referent object, the rebounding argument. The meaning or definition of a term’s

referent object has to satisfy all the instances of that object, whereas the meaning of the term does not.

For instance, another word for lotus is “lake-born” (*sarasija*, *mtsho skyes*) or “water-born” (*ambhoja*, *chu skyes*). The meaning of the term “lake-born” is ‘a phenomenon that was born in or grew from a lake’. However, this meaning does not satisfy the instances of all lotuses, for there are lotuses that grow in soil.

Alternatively, if it were a correct challenge, the reasons [the challenger] cites would also have the same resultant fault. Thus it is called “*the same result*”.

The second explanation of the meaning of the term “*aflawed refutation of the same result*” is:

As mentioned above, if the refutation by a challenger, directed at the reason of a syllogism were correct, the reason the challenger himself sets forth (in order to establish the thesis of the syllogism) would incur the same fault.

Therefore, his objection is a *flawed refutation of the same result* since his *flawed refutation* leads to *the same result*. It leads to the same result, because the fault the challenger attributes to the original reason applies to his own reason.

Likewise, in order to establish that sound is impermanent, the reason “product” is cited. When others argue, “If you cite ‘the product-ness of sound’ as the reason, it stands in contradiction [to satisfying the forward pervasion]; if you cite ‘the product-ness of vase’ [the property of the subject] is not established; if you cite ‘that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon either’, it is a wrong [syllogism] of uncommon non-ascertainment” – that is a rebounding argument.

Gyaltsab Je cites another example of a rebounding argument. Based on the correct syllogism: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product. For instance, like a vase*, a challenger engages in a mistaken analysis and objection to that syllogism by arguing:

*If the reason, “product”, were to refer to “the product-ness of sound” the reason would not satisfy the forward pervasion.*

*If the reason “product”, were to refer to “the product-ness of a vase” the reason would not satisfy the the property of the subject.*

*If the reason, “product”, were to refer to “that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon either”, while it satisfies the first mode, the property of the subject, the syllogism would be a wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment.*

*Hence, this is not a correct syllogism, for the reason is not correct. The reason is not correct because it does not satisfy the three modes of a correct reason. The reason does not satisfy the three modes of a correct reason, because either the reason does not satisfy the forward pervasion, or it does not satisfy the property of the subject.*

Our own system agrees that if the reason “product” were to refer to “the product-ness of sound”, the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion;<sup>28</sup> if it were to refer to

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<sup>28</sup>If the reason, “product” were to refer to “the product-ness of sound” (i.e., “the quality of being a product that is a quality of sound”), the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion because in order for a syllogism to satisfy the forward pervasion the defendant must realize the syllogism’s pervasion on the basis of the example. In the case of the above-cited correct syllogism (*Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent because it is a product. For instance, like a vase*) the defendant must realise that if a vase (the example) is impermanent, it is necessarily a product. This can only be realized if a vase is the common locus of “being impermanent” (the predicate) and “being a product” (the reason), i.e., if a vase is both impermanent and a product.

However, if – as the challenger engaging in the flawed objection suggests – the reason of the syllogism (“product”) were to refer to “the product-ness of sound”, the syllogism would not satisfy the forward pervasion. It would not satisfy the forward pervasion because it would not be possible to realize the syllogism’s pervasion on the basis of the

“the product-ness of a vase” it would not establish the property of the subject<sup>29</sup>; and if it were to refer to “that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon either” – while satisfying the property of the subject, the syllogism would be a wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment.<sup>30</sup>

However, this does not mean that the original syllogism is not correct because, as mentioned above, although the general phenomenon (“product”) is a correct reason able to establish the thesis (“sound is impermanent”), this does not mean that specifics or instances of that phenomenon are able to establish the thesis.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is a rebounding argument?
2. How does a rebounding argument rebound?
3. Why does the opponent claim that our own system’s analysis and objection to the opponent’s second syllogism amount to a rebounding argument?

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example. It would not be possible to realize the pervasion on the basis of the example, because vase is not a common locus of the predicate, “being impermanent” and the reason “being the product-ness of sound”. A vase is not a common locus of those two, because a vase is not the “the product-ness of sound”.

<sup>29</sup>If the reason, “product” were to refer to “the product-ness of a vase” (i.e. the quality of being a product that is a quality of a vase”), the syllogism would not satisfy the property of the subject, because for a reason to satisfy the property of the subject, the subject must satisfy the reason. In the case of the above-cited correct syllogism, the reason satisfies the property of the subject because sound satisfies the reason. Sound satisfies the reason because sound is impermanent.

Yet, as posited by the person engaging in the flawed analysis, if the reason of the syllogism were “the product-ness of a vase”, the property of the subject would not be established, because sound is not “the product-ness of a vase”.

<sup>30</sup>If the reason “product” were to refer to “that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon either” the syllogism would be a *wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment*. A *wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment* is a type of *wrong syllogism of non-ascertainment*. As mentioned above, a *wrong syllogism of non-ascertainment* refers to a syllogism that satisfies the first mode (the property of the subject) but possesses neither a correct pervasion nor a pervasion of contradiction. A *wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment* is a syllogism, the defendant of which neither realizes that the reason exists in the predicate nor that the reason exists in the opposite of the predicate.

If a syllogism is a correct syllogism, its defendant necessarily realizes that the reason exists in the predicate, and is unable to realize that the reason exists in the *opposite* of the predicate. For instance, in the case of the correct syllogism: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product*, the defendant realizes that the reason, (“product”) exists in the predicate (“impermanent”) because he realizes that “product” exists in “impermanent”. He realizes that “product” exists in “impermanent” because he realizes that “product” and “impermanent” have a common locus (i.e., that there is something that is both a product and impermanent). However, he is unable to realize that the reason (“product”) exists in the opposite of the predicate (“permanent”), because “product” does not exist in “permanent”. “Product” does not exist in “permanent” because there is nothing that is both a product and permanent.

But, as the challenger who presents the rebounding argument suggests, if the reason, “product” were to refer to “that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon either” – while the syllogism satisfies the first mode, the property of the subject – it would be a *wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment*. It would be a *wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment* because it would be a *wrong syllogism of non-ascertainment*, the defendant of which would be unable to realize that the reason exists in the predicate and that the reason exists in the opposite of the predicate. The defendant would be unable to realize that because the reason would exist neither in the predicate (“impermanent”) nor in the opposite of the predicate (“permanent”). The reason would not exist in the opposite of the predicate because it would not exist in “permanent”. The reason would not exist in “permanent”, because, according to the challenger, the reason refers to “that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon either”.

Likewise, the reason would not exist in the predicate (“impermanent”) since the word “either” of the reason “that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon *either*” implies that not only does the reason not exist in a permanent phenomenon (i.e., the opposite of the predicate), it also does not exist in an impermanent phenomenon (i.e., the predicate).

Therefore, if the reason, “product” were to refer to “that which does not exist in a permanent phenomenon either” and it established the property of the subject, the syllogism would be a *wrong syllogism of uncommon non-ascertainment* because its defendant would realize the property of the subject, but not be able to realize that the reason exists in the predicate or that the reason exists in the opposite of the predicate.

4. According to our own system, why does our own system's analysis and objection to the opponent's second syllogism not amount to a rebounding argument?
5. If we take the correct syllogism: *Regarding the subject, John, he is selfless, because he is impermanent. For instance, like Tashi*: Why would the syllogism not satisfy the forward pervasion if the reason, "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of John"?
6. Why would the syllogism not satisfy the property of the subject if the reason, "impermanent" were to refer to "the impermanence of Tashi"?
7. What is the first example of a rebounding argument cited by Gyaltsab Je?
8. Who cites the correct syllogism on which the rebounding argument is based, and who engages in the flawed analysis and objection to that syllogism?
9. What are the assertions of the followers of the Samkhya School regarding causality?
10. Why would the correct syllogism cited by a Samkhya not satisfy the forward pervasion if the reason, "it has arisen through effort", were to mean "it exists prior to the effort and will later reveal itself"?
11. Why would the correct syllogism cited by a Samkhya not satisfy the property of the subject if the reason, "it has arisen through effort", were to refer to "it has arisen newly without having existed prior to the effort"?
12. What is the meaning of the term: "*a flawed refutation that is the same with respect to the result*"?
13. What is the meaning of the term: "*a flawed refutation of the same result*"?
14. What is the second example of a rebounding argument cited by Gyaltsab Je?

## THE WORD "SHAPE" IS UNSUITABLE AS A REASON

[This is divided into:]

- (1) An example of it being unreasonable to cite merely seeing the word "shape" as a reason
- (2) The logical absurdity

## AN EXAMPLE OF IT BEING UNREASONABLE TO CITE MERELY SEEING THE WORD "SHAPE" AS A REASON

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Specific types of objects are established.*

*It is not acceptable to establish something in dependence*

*On seeing the general term. It is just like [inferring]*

*That spoken words, and so forth, have horns because of [the term] "gau".*

It follows that **it is not acceptable to establish** that abodes, bodies, etc. are created by a living being **in dependence on seeing** that **the general term** "shape" is applied to them – which is similar to **specific types of shaped objects**, such as vases, etc. being **established** as having the term "shaped objects" assigned to them – because the [syllogism's] pervasion is not ascertained. For example, it is **just** as unacceptable to infer that **because** one notices the term "**gau**", the subject, **spoken words, and so forth have horns**.

In an earlier outline ("The meaning of shape is unsuitable as a reason") our own system explained that the meaning of shape, *i.e.*, shape itself, is not able to establish that

worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are preceded by the awareness of a creator, that is, that they are created by a living being such as God.

In the present outline, our own system demonstrates that the word “shape” is similarly unable to establish that worldly abodes, etc. are created by someone:

*Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments, they are created by a living being, because their shape and the shape of vases are the same in that the general word “shape” can be applied to them.*

This syllogism is not correct and thus unable to establish the thesis (“worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments are created by a living being”) because there is no pervasion. The syllogism does not have a pervasion, for even though the shape of particular phenomena and the shape of vases are the same in that they are called “shape”, this does not mean that those phenomena are created by a living being.

Hence the fact that the shape of worldly abodes, etc. and the shape of vases are called “shapes” does not mean that the vases’ characteristic of being created by someone is also a characteristic of worldly abodes, etc.

For example, the fact that spoken words and cows are both called “gau” does not mean that cows’ characteristic feature of having horns is also a characteristic of spoken words.

This example relates to the Sankrit word “gau” which can be translated in different ways. Nagarjuna says in his auto-commentary on the *Treatise on the Finely Woven* (*Vaidalya sutra, zhib mo rnam thag gi rang ‘grel*) that the word “gau” has nine different meanings. “Gau” can mean spoken words (speech), earth, ray of light, eye sense, and so forth. Yet it is often translated as cow.

Therefore, just as it is not acceptable to infer that spoken words have horns (like cows do) because spoken words and cows are the same in that they are referred to as “gau”, it is not acceptable to infer that worldly abodes, etc. are created by someone because their shape and the shape of vases are the same in that they are referred to as “shape”.

Similarly, it is not acceptable to infer that worldly abodes, etc. are created by someone because their shape is referred to as “shape that was created by a living being”. In other words, even if one were to call the shape of worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments “shape that was created by a living being”, that does not make it true. If merely calling it such were to make it true, the following logical absurdity would occur:

## THE LOGICAL ABSURDITY

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since [expressive sounds] are under the control of [someone’s] desire to express [them],  
There is nowhere for which there are no [expressive] sounds.  
If the referent objects were established on account of the existence of [the terms]  
All [living beings] would accomplish all [objectives].*

It follows **that** all living beings **would accomplish all** desired objectives without effort, because **referent objects would be established on account of the existence** of the terms for those [objects]. There is a pervasion, because **there are no things for which there are no** expressive **sounds**. This is because [expressive sounds] **are** merely **under the control of** [someone’s] **desire to express** [them].

If by just calling the shape of worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments “shape that was created by a living being” the shape of worldly abodes, etc. actually *were* shape that was created by someone, the following syllogism would be a correct syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, objects of knowledge<sup>31</sup>, living beings are able to accomplish all their objectives, because referent objects exist on account of the existence of the terms that express those objects.*

If this were a correct syllogism, it would imply that whenever there was a term that expressed an object, the object would have to exist. As a result, there would be nothing living beings could not obtain or achieve, because there is nothing that does not have an expressive sound or word that expresses it, since expressive sounds are merely the result of someone wishing to utter them.

For instance, if whenever the expressive sound “wealth” was uttered there had to be wealth, no one would have to be poor. Poverty could be eliminated simply in dependence on someone wishing to utter the word “wealth”.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why is the following syllogism not a correct syllogism: *Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies, and enjoyments, they are created by a living being, because their shape and the shape of vases are the same in that the general term “shape” can be applied to them.*
2. If the shape of a particular object and the shape of a vase are both called “shape”, why does the vase’s characteristic of being created by someone not have to characterize that other object?
3. What example is given for it not being unreasonable to cite as a reason the mere noticing of the word “shape”?
4. According to Nagarjuna’s auto-commentary on the *Treatise of the Finely Woven*, how many meanings are there for the Sanskrit word “gau” ?
5. What would be the logical absurdity if a referent object were have to be found wherever the term denoting that referent object is uttered?

## REFUTING OTHER TYPES OF [NON-BUDDHIST VIEWS] THROUGH THAT

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*This [line of reasoning] also examines Kapilas, and so forth,  
[Who say that] since [awareness and pleasure] are impermanent, etc. they are  
non-mental, etc.  
[Who say that] since [a tree] dies when it is stripped of its bark,  
It possesses a mind.*

Regarding the subject, **this** line of reasoning that challenges the reasons [purporting to] establish God, in reliance on it one is able to **examine** and refute other wrong proofs, such as those of the **Kapilas**, Jainas, **and so forth**, because one is able to analyze and refute [the following syllogisms]. The Kapilas say: Regarding the subject, awareness and pleasure, **they are non-mental, etc.** and material, because they **are impermanent, etc.** and generated. Also, the Jainas say: Regarding the subject, a tree, it possesses a mind, because it dies when its bark is stripped.

The line of reasoning mentioned here refers to the logical arguments presented by our own system in the following two outlines:

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<sup>31</sup>Please note then when a syllogism does not have a specific subject, “object of knowledge” is cited as the subject.

(1) [If] a specific shape is [cited as the] reason, the property of the subject is not established

(2) [If] a mere shape [is cited as the reason, the pervasion is] not ascertained

These arguments are directed to the second syllogism cited by an opponent in order to establish that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by the awareness of a creator<sup>32</sup>.

The same course of reasoning presented in those two outlines can be applied to the syllogisms set forth by non-Buddhists such as the Kapilas and the Jains.

The Kapilas are followers of Kapila, a non-Buddhist Indian sage who was one of the teachers of the Samkhya School. Kapilas are also referred to as followers of the Samkhya School. In fact, according to Jangya Rolbay Dorje's *Presentation of Tenets*, many scholars assert that Kapilas and Samkhyas are synonymous<sup>33</sup>.

Samkhya is usually translated as "Enumerator". According to the Indian Master Bodhibhadra (*slob dpon byang chub bzang po*), Kapilas are called "Samkhyas" or "Enumerators" because they assert a definite enumeration of the causes that generate things. Alternatively, the Indian Master Bhavaviveka (*legs ldan 'byed*) says in his *Blaze of Reasoning (Tarkajvala/rtog ge 'bar ba)* that they are called "Enumerators" because they hold that sentient beings attain liberation through understanding the enumeration of the twenty-five categories of phenomena<sup>34</sup> asserted by the Samkhyas, or through completely knowing enumerations<sup>35</sup>.

According to the Samkhyas, the following syllogism is a correct syllogism: *Regarding the subject, awareness and pleasure, they are non-mental and material, because they are impermanent and generated.*

Dharmakirti states the predicate and reason of this syllogism in the *Pramanavarttika* (*This [line of reasoning] also examines Kapilas, and so forth / [Who say that] since [awareness and pleasure] are impermanent, etc. they are non-mental, etc.*). According to Dharmakirti, "non-mental, etc." is the predicate and "impermanent, etc." the reason.

The word "etc." of "non-mental, etc." includes 'material' or 'matter', and the "etc." of "impermanent, etc." includes 'being generated'. Therefore, the predicate of the syllogism cited above is "non-mental and material", and the reason "impermanent and generated".

The Samkhyas hold that awareness (also referred to as 'the great one') empowers the senses and apprehends the objects apprehended by the senses. These objects are then known by the self. The self is mental and awareness is matter in which consciousness mixes with the senses. Awareness is like a two-sided mirror which reflects the images of objects from the outside and the image of the self from the inside<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>32</sup>The second syllogism is: *Regarding the subject, worldly abodes, bodies and enjoyments, they are preceded by the awareness of a creator, because they have a specific shape. For instance, like a vase.*

<sup>33</sup>Jangya Rolbay Dorje's *Presentation of Tenets*: "gzhung chen mo 'ga' zhiq tu so sor bshad kyang grang can gyi nang tshan zhiq la ser skya par btags pa tsam yin zhiq de gnyis don gcig tub shad pa yang mang ngo."

<sup>34</sup>The Samkhyas posit twenty-five categories of phenomena: (1) self (or person), (2) fundamental nature (or nature, principal, generality, general principle), (3) awareness (or great one), (4) I-principle, (5) sounds, (6) tangible objects, (7) odors, (8) visible forms, (9) tastes, (10) speech, (11) arms, (12) legs, (13) anus, (14) genitalia, (15) ear, (16) body or skin, (17) tongue, (18) eye, (19) nose, (20) intellectual faculty (the nature of which is both mental and physical), (21) earth, (22) water, (23) fire, (24) wind, (25) space.

Of the twenty-five categories, (1) the self is mental; it is not physical or material. The other twenty-four are matter. Furthermore, the self and the fundamental nature are permanent because they are neither generated nor do they degenerate.

<sup>35</sup>Jeffrey Hopkin's *Maps of the Profound* [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 105

<sup>36</sup>Jeffrey Hopkin's *Cutting Through Appearances* [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p. 164

The Samkhyas also assert that pleasure is material and not mental. They maintain that both awareness and pleasure are matter because they are impermanent and thus are generated and degenerate.

According to the Samkhya School, only the self (which is permanent) is consciousness.

However, according to our own system, both awareness and pleasure are mental and thus non-physical, which is why the syllogism cited by the Samkhyas does not have a pervasion. It does not have a pervasion because whatever is impermanent and generated is not necessarily non-mental and material.

The Jainas<sup>37</sup> cite the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, a tree, it possesses a mind, because it dies when its bark is stripped.*

According to the Jainas, trees, plants, the four elements (earth, water, fire, and wind), and so forth possess mind. They hold that trees must be sentient, for they sleep in the winter, become active in the summer, and die when their bark is stripped.

Although our own system accepts that trees are less active in the winter, more active in the summer, and die when their bark is stripped, it does not assert this to be a correct reason able to establish that trees possess mind. Therefore, according to our own system, the syllogism cited by the Jainas does not have a pervasion (i.e., whatever dies when its bark is stripped does not necessarily possess a mind)

The logical arguments examining the reason of the second syllogism cited by an opponent in order to establish that worldly abodes, etc. are preceded by consciousness can also be applied to the above-cited syllogisms by the Samkhyas and Jainas by examining the reasons of the syllogisms in the same way.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What does the “line of reasoning” mentioned in this outline refer to?
2. Why are the Kapilas referred to as “Samkhyas” or “Enumerators”?
3. How many categories of phenomena do the Kapilas/Samkhyas assert?
4. What is the assertion of the Jainas with regard to trees, plants, the four elements, and so forth?

## THE OBJECTIVE THAT IS ACCOMPLISHED BY THOSE [REFUTATIONS]

This outline provides an ancillary explanation to the refutation of a creator God.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If someone does not establish the entity of a functioning thing [in relation to the subject], This is the mode [of the property of the subject not being established for the respondent]; ...*

An example [which demonstrates] that, of the entity and the specifics, the entity is principal:

Of the entity and the specifics of a reason, the entity is essential, because **if someone does not establish the functioning entity** of the reason – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to the subject sought to be known, it is feasible that [from the

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<sup>37</sup>For a presentation of the tenets of the non-Buddhist Jainas (also referred to as “Nirgranthas”) see Jeffrey Hopkin’s *Cutting Through Appearances* [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p.167-168 and *Maps of the Profound* [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 151-176



perspective of that person] **this is the mode of** [the property of the subject] not being established.

Having previously refuted the opponent's syllogisms purporting to establish the existence of a creator God, in this section our own system presents the objectives accomplished by those refutations.

One of the objectives is to understand that, of the general entity of a phenomenon and the specifics of that phenomenon, the general entity is of prime importance when citing a syllogism.

This is because if the respondent of a syllogism does not establish, that is, realize that the general entity of the reason exists in relation to the subject, the syllogism is not a correct syllogism for that respondent. For that respondent it is not a correct syllogism because from his perspective the property of the subject is not established.

Taking the example of the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product.*

This is a correct syllogism because it satisfies the three modes of a reason. It satisfies the three modes of a reason, for it satisfies the property of the subject and the forward pervasion.

The syllogism satisfies the property of the subject because there is someone seeking to know whether sound is impermanent who has realized that the general entity of the reason<sup>38</sup>, product, exists in relation to the subject, sound. There is someone seeking to know whether sound is impermanent who has realized that the entity of the reason, product, exists in relation to sound, because there is someone who has not yet realized that sound is impermanent, wishes to realize it, and has realized that product exists in relation to sound. This person has realized that product exists in relation to sound, because he has realized that sound *is* a product.<sup>39</sup>

Yet even though in general this syllogism is a correct syllogism, from the perspective of the person who has *not* realized that product exists in relation to sound, this syllogism is not a correct syllogism. From the perspective of this person, it is not a correct syllogism because from his perspective it does not satisfy the first mode: the property of the subject. For that person it does not satisfy the property of the subject because that person has not realized the property of the subject. He has not realized the property of the subject since he has not realized that the reason, product, exists in relation to the subject, sound (and thus that sound *is* a product).<sup>40</sup>

Therefore, Gyaltsab Je says in his *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*: "Of the entity and the specifics of a reason, the entity is essential, because **if someone does not establish the functioning entity** of the reason – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to the subject sought to be known, it is feasible that [from the perspective of that person] **this is the mode of** [the property of the subject] not being established."

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<sup>38</sup>In case of the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent because it is a product*, the general entity of the reason (product) is product itself. The specifics of product are instances or examples of product, such as vase, table, sound, and so forth.

<sup>39</sup>As mentioned before, the meaning of "x" existing in relation to "y" is that "y" is "x". Therefore, product exists in relation to sound because sound is a product; impermanent exists in relation to a vase because a vase is impermanent, and so forth.

<sup>40</sup>Please note that there are two reasons for a syllogism to not satisfy the property of the subject from the perspective of a person: (1) either the person has realized the thesis or (2) he has not realized that the reason exists in relation to the subject.

Explaining this passage based on the above-cited syllogism, the phrase “in conformity with the way it is cited” means that the general entity of product existing in relation to sound is consistent with the way “product” is cited as the reason of the syllogism.

Also, the subject is described as “the subject sought to be known” because based on the subject sound, the syllogism’s respondent seeks to know the impermanence of sound.

Hence, of the entity of the reason (product itself) and the specifics of product (e.g., a vase, the product-ness of sound, the product-ness of a table, etc.), the entity of product is essential, because if someone does not realize that the functioning entity, product, exists – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to the subject sought to be known (sound), the syllogism does not satisfy the property of the subject from the perspective of that person.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*... if he establishes it,  
Even if he does not establish the specifics, there is no fault.*

Yet **if he establishes** [the entity of the reason in relation to the subject], **even if he does not establish the specifics** [of the reason] in relation to the subject, **there is no fault**.

If the respondent of a syllogism has realized that the general entity of the reason exists in relation to the subject – although he has *not* realized that any of the specifics of the reason exist in relation to the subject – the fault of the syllogism not satisfying the first mode of the reason from the perspective of that person does not occur.

Taking the example of the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product*, if its respondent, seeking to realize that sound is impermanent, has realized that product exists in relation to sound, the syllogism does not incur the fault of not establishing the property of the subject from the perspective of that respondent. It does not incur that fault even if the respondent has not realized that the instances of product – such as ‘physical form’<sup>41</sup> – exist in relation to sound. This is because even though the respondent has not realized that ‘physical form’ exists in relation to sound (for he has not realized that ‘sound is a physical form’) he has realized everything he needs to realize in order for that syllogism to satisfy the property of the subject from his perspective.

For example, if the entity of “product” is established in relation to “sound” – in conformity with the way it is cited – there is no fault, even if a specific product that pertains to being synonymous with a quality of space is not established in relation to sound.

Here, our own system cites a different example of a specific case or instance of the reason, product; it cites an instance of product that is asserted by the Vaisheshikas (*bye brag pa*, ‘Particularists’ or ‘Detailists’) since the explanations provided here are also directed at those holding the views of the Vaisheshikas.<sup>42</sup>

The Vaisheshikas are non-Buddhist Indian philosophers who are followers of the Indian sages Kanada and Uluka. Their assertions are briefly presented below.

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<sup>41</sup>Physical form is an instance of product because physical form is a product and because there are products that are not physical form. There are products that are not physical form because consciousness and karmic imprints are products but not physical form.

<sup>42</sup>The explanations provided here are directed at persons holding the views of the Vaisheshikas, since those explanations are given in the context of refuting the existence of God, and the opponents purporting to establish the existence of God are Vaisheshikas and Nyaiayikas.

The instance of product that is cited here and asserted by the Vaisheshika is: 'a product that pertains to being synonymous with a quality of space'.

'A product that pertains to being equivalent with a quality of space' does not exist in relation to sound, for sound is not a product that is equivalent with a quality of space. (The meaning of 'a product that pertains to being synonymous with a quality of space' will become clearer when presenting the assertions of the Vaisheshika below.)

Thus, when the respondent of the syllogism (*Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product*) realizes that product exists in relation to sound, in order to realize the syllogism's property of the subject, there is no fault if he does *not* realize that a specific product, e.g. 'a product that pertains to being synonymous with a quality of space' – as asserted by the Vaisheshikas – exists in relation to sound.

The respondent does not realize that 'a product that pertains to being synonymous with a quality of space' exists in relation to sound, (1) because in order to realize the syllogism's property of the subject he only needs to realize that product itself exists in relation to sound and (2) because 'a product that pertains to being synonymous with a quality of space' does *not* exist in relation to space.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*It is like sound that depends on space.*

Alternatively, there is no fault if someone establishes [a phenomenon] in relation to sound, but does not establish [the phenomenon] in relation to a specific **sound that depends on space**.

Just as of the general entity of the *reason* and its specifics, the general entity of the reason is of prime importance, when it comes to the general entity of the *subject* and the specifics of that subject, the general entity of the subject is essential.

Therefore, there is no fault if the respondent of the above-cited syllogism (which establishes that sound is impermanent in dependence on the reason, product) realizes that product exists in relation to sound but does not realize that product exists in relation to a specific sound – such as 'sound that depends on space'.

'Sound that depends on space' is also asserted by the Vaisheshikas. According to the Vaisheshikas, space is permanent and since sound is a quality of space, sound is also permanent.

The respondent who realizes that product exists in relation to sound does not realize that product exists in relation to 'sound that depends on space', (1) because in order to realize the syllogism's property of the subject he only needs to realize that product exists in relation to the general entity of sound, and (2) because product does *not* exist in relation to 'sound that depends on space'. Product does not exist in relation to 'sound that depends on space', for 'sound that depends on space' is not a product. It is not a product because it is permanent.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Although the term is not established, if a functioning thing  
Is established [in relation to the subject, the property of the subject] is established.....*

An example [which demonstrates] that of a name and [its] referent object, the referent object is paramount:

Regarding the subject, product, **although the term is not established** as that which is expressed by [product's expressive] sound, [product] **is established** as the property of the subject establishing that sound is impermanent, because [product], **a functioning thing**,

**is established** as being only existent – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to sound, the subject sought to be known.

Another objective accomplished by refuting the opponents' syllogisms is to understand that of a name (or term) and its referent object, the referent object is of prime importance.

Taking the example of the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent because it is a product.*

Although sound is not established or realized as that which is expressed by the expressive sound "product", product is realized as the property of the subject of the syllogism establishing that sound is impermanent.

The expressive sound expressing "product" refers to the verbally expressed word "product". Sound is not realized as that which is expressed by the expressive sound "product" because sound is not that which is expressed by the word "product". Sound is not that which is expressed by the word "product", because the word "product" expresses product; it does not express sound.

But even though sound is not that which is expressed by the word "product", product is realized as the property of the subject of the syllogism establishing that sound is impermanent. Product is realized as the property of the subject of the syllogism establishing that sound is impermanent because product is the property of the subject of that syllogism. Product is the property of the subject of that syllogism, for product is realized as only existing – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to sound, the subject sought to be known.

Product is realized as only existing in relation to sound because product is *only* existent in relation to sound. Product is *only* existent in relation to sound because (1) product exists in relation to sound and (2) there is no sound in relation to which product does not exist. Product exists in relation to sound, for sound is a product. Also, there is no sound in relation to which product does not exist because whatever is a sound is necessarily a product.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

.....*For example, it is like Buddhists explaining to Ulukas  
The proof, body-possessors, and so forth.*

**For example, it is like Buddhists explaining to Ulukas** [the following] **proof**: Regarding the subject, the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent, because they are **body-possessors**.

It is held that [the term] "**and so forth**" [indicates]"obstructive".

As an example, our own system cites a syllogism to illustrate that of the two, a name (or term) and its referent object, the referent object is essential:

This syllogism is cited by a Buddhist to an Uluka. "Ulukas" is another term for Vaisheshikas, who are referred to as Ulukas because they follow the Indian sage Uluka.

The syllogism directed at an Uluka or Vaisheshika is: *Regarding the subject, the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent, because they are body-possessors.*

To be a body-possessor (Tib: *lus can*) or 'to possess a body' means to have a physical form.

Dharmakirti mentions the reason of the syllogism ("body-possessors") in the *Pramanavarttika* with the words, "*The proof, body-possessors, and so forth*". The words "*and so forth*" indicate the feature of being obstructive.

Therefore, Dharmakirti indicates that the particles of the four elements (the subject of the syllogism) are not only body-possessors, they are also obstructive.

Between the challenger and the respondent, there is no common perception of that to which the term “body-possessor” is applied.

As mentioned above, the challenger (the person who cites the syllogism) is a Buddhist, and the respondent (at whom the syllogism is directed) a Vaisheshika. The challenger and the respondent hold different views regarding the objects to which the term “body-possessor” can be applied.

Buddhists assert that the particles of the four elements are body-possessors, while the Vaisheshikas do not.

The reason for this different view is elucidated in this brief presentation of the assertions of the Vaisheshikas.

This is because: the Vaisheshikas assert that all objects of knowledge are subsumed under six categories: (1) substance, (2) quality, (3) action, (4) generality, (5) particularity, and (6) inherence

(1) Substance is also [classified into two]. Substances that are not ubiquitous: the four elements and mind, and substances that are ubiquitous: self, time, direction, and space.

The Vaisheshikas assert that whatever exists pertains to one of the six categories: (1) substance, (2) quality, (3) activity, (4) generality, (5) particularity, and (6) inherence.

According to Jamyang Shepa's *Great Presentation of Tenets (grub mtha' chen mo)*<sup>43</sup>, substance, generality, particularity, and inherence are permanent. Quality has both permanent and impermanent factors, and activity is only impermanent.

According to Kamalashila's *Commentary on the Difficult Points of (Shantarakshita's) 'Compendium of Principles' (Tattvasamgraha panjika)*<sup>44</sup> and Khedrup Je's *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning (tshad ma rnam 'grel tik chen rigs pa'i rgya tsho)*<sup>45</sup> substance has both permanent and impermanent factors.<sup>46</sup>

Bhavaviveka<sup>47</sup> describes substance as that which has the three features of possessing activity, possessing qualities, and serving as a cause of inherence.<sup>48</sup>

Substance can be subdivided into nine: (1) earth, (2) water, (3) fire, (4) wind, (5) mind, (6) self, (7) time, (8) direction, and (9) space. Those nine can be classified into

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<sup>43</sup>Jamyang Zhepa Ngawang Tsondu (1648-1721/2) was an important master who composed a famous text on philosophical tenet systems, the *Great Presentation of Tenets (grub mtha' chen mo)*. He founded the monastery of Labrang Tashikyil in 1708.

<sup>44</sup>Kamalashila (c. 740-795) was a great India master and the main disciple of the great abbot Shantarakshita. He famously defeated a Chinese master in the great debate at Samye in Tibet, which took place around 792 AD, thereby ensuring that the Tibetans followed the Indian tradition of Madhyamika, which flourished at the great Nalanda Monastic University. Kamalashila's most famous compositions are his three texts entitled *Stages of Meditation (Bhavanakrama, sgom rim)*.

<sup>45</sup>Khedrup Je (1385-1438) was one of the main disciples of Lama Tsongkhapa, famous for his polemical writings. He composed nine volumes on sutras and tantras. His most famous composition on *Pramanavarttika* is his *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning*.

<sup>46</sup>See Jeffrey Hopkin's *Maps of the Profound* [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 164

<sup>47</sup>Bhavaviveka (c. 500-570) was a famous Indian master of the Svatantrika School of Madhyamika.

<sup>48</sup>See Jeffrey Hopkin's *Maps of the Profound* [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 162

substances that are not ubiquitous or all-pervasive and substances that are all-pervasive.

Substances that are not all-pervasive are delimited and refer to the four elements (earth, water, fire, and wind) and mind. Substances that are all-pervasive and hence not delimited refer to the self, time, direction, and space.

The second category, quality, has twenty-five types: (1) form, (2) taste, (3) smell, (4) touch, (5) sound, (6) number, (7) size, (8) separateness, (9) conjunction, (10) disjunction, (11) otherness, (12) non-otherness, (13) consciousness, (14) pleasure, (15) pain, (16) desire, (17) hatred, (18) effort, (19) heaviness, (20) moisture, (21) heat, (22) oiliness, (23) momentum, (24) merit, (25) demerit.

A quality has four features: (a) it depends on a substance, (b) it does not possess other qualities, (c) it does not act either as a cause of inherence or as a cause non-inherence, and (d) it does not depend on another quality as a proof of its existence but is a proof for the existence of a substance.

The third category, activity, has five types: (1) lifting up, (2) putting down, (3) contraction, (4) extension, and (5) going.

The fourth quality, generality, refers to the common cause of designating terms and engaging the mind in a similar way with regard to a class of phenomena.

The fifth quality, particularity, refers to the cause of perceiving the difference between a particular phenomenon and other phenomena; the cause of perceiving that which distinguishes a particular phenomenon from others.

The sixth quality, inherence, refers to a phenomenon which is the conjunction of a base and that which is based on it.<sup>49</sup>

Of the six categories, (2) quality [includes] size. When dividing size there is big, small, long, and short.

As mentioned above, the second category, quality has twenty-five types. Of the twenty-five, one quality is 'size'. 'Size' can be divided into (a) big, (b) small, (c) long, and (d) short.

Big is [divided into] permanent and impermanent. Permanent big is the quality that depends on the latter four substances. Impermanent big is the quality that depends on substances that possess parts and are composed of three or more particles.

'Big' can be subdivided into (i) permanent big and (ii) impermanent big.

'Permanent big' refers to the quality that depends on the latter four substances: self, time, direction, and space.

'Impermanent big' refers to the quality that depends on a substance that is composed of at least three particles.

Small is also [divided] in the same way. Permanent small is the quality that is characterized by a particle appearing to the mind as round. Impermanent small is the quality that depends on the initial [substance] that has parts.

'Small' can also be subdivided into (i) permanent small and (ii) impermanent small.

'Permanent small' refers to what makes a particle appearing to be round.

'Impermanent small' refers to the quality that depends on an initial substance that has parts. An initial substance means a substance that is composed of only two parts.

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<sup>49</sup>See Jeffrey Hopkin's *Cutting Through Appearances* [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p. 156-157 and *Maps of the Profound* [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 160-173

The Vaisheshikas hold that in general, there are three types of substance that are the building blocks of part-possessing substances: (1) subtle single particles, (2) initial part-possessors that are produced from the cluster of two single particles, and (3) secondary coarse part-possessors that are produced from the cluster of three or more particles.

According to the Vaisheshikas, (1) subtle single particles are parts but not part-possessors. They are parts because they are the smallest basic components constituting coarser substances. They are not part-possessors because they are partless. (2) Initial substances (which are slightly coarser than single particles) and (3) secondary substances (which are described as coarse) are both parts and part-possessors.

‘Permanent small’ – the quality responsible for a particle appearing to the mind as round – is the quality of (1) subtle single particles.

‘Impermanent small’ – the quality that depends on an initial substance that has parts – is the quality of (2) initial part-possessing substances that are produced from the cluster of two particles.

‘Impermanent big’ – the quality that depends on a substance that is composed of at least three particles – is the quality of (3) secondary part-possessors that are produced from the cluster of three or more particles.

The particles of the four elements (the subject of the above-cited syllogism) are substances. They refer to subtle single particles of earth, water, fire, and wind. The particles of earth are an earth substance, the particles of water are a water substance, and so forth.

Khedrup Je explains in his *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning* that according to the Vaisheshika, subtle, single particles are permanent. They are permanent because impermanent particles are the results of the cluster of smaller particles which are their causes. However, since subtle single particles are partless they are not the results of the cluster of even smaller particles. Therefore, they are permanent.<sup>50</sup>

Furthermore, Khedrub Je says that only the four elements are able to form part-possessing substances. The remaining substances (mind, self, time, direction, and space) are unable to do so.<sup>51</sup>

Long and short are similar to impermanent big and small.

Of the four types of ‘size’, ‘long’ and ‘short’ are similar to ‘impermanent big’ and ‘impermanent small’. This is because ‘long’ refers to the quality that depends on a substance that is composed of at least three particles, while short refers to the quality that depends on an initial substance that has parts (*i.e.*, a substance that is composed of two particles).

It is accepted that the term “body-possessor” is applicable to all the sizes except the permanent big.

The Vaisheshikas hold that except for ‘permanent big’ which refers to the quality that depends on the latter four substances – self, time, direction, and space – the remaining three types of ‘size’ are called “body-possessors”.

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<sup>50</sup>Khedrup Je’s *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning* (*tshad ma rnam ‘grel tik chen rigs pa’i rgya tsho*) [Library of Gashar: 1999], p. 630: “De yang rdul phran re re ba dag rtag pa’i rgyu mtshan ni rdul yin pa gzhi byas la rgyu yod na rtsom byed yod dgos pa la rdul phran re re ba dag la ni rtsom byed med de gzhan du ni yan lag can du ‘gyur ro des na rgyu med pa’i phyir rtag pa yin no.”

<sup>51</sup>Khedrup Je’s *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning* (*tshad ma rnam ‘grel tik chen rigs pa’i rgya tsho*) [Library of Gashar: 1999], p. 631: “Des na ‘byung ba bzhi’i rdzas kho nas yan lag can gyi rdzes rtsom par nus kyi gzhan gyis yan lag can gyi rdzas btsom par mi nus la.”

The remaining three types of 'size' called "body-possessors" are the qualities of the three types of substances that serve as the building blocks of other substances ('permanent small', 'impermanent small', and 'impermanent big').

According to the Vaisheshika, body-possessors are necessarily qualities. Thus, the Vaisheshikas do not accept that the particles of the four elements are body-possessors since these particles are not qualities but substances.

The meaning of 'body-possessor' is 'that which possesses tangibility'. It is that which both disputants accept to be established – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to [the particles of] the four elements.

From a Buddhist point of view, the meaning of a body-possessor is 'that which possesses tangibility'. So Buddhists maintain that whatever is tangible (such as the particles of the four elements) is necessarily a body-possessor and whatever is a body-possessor is necessarily tangible.

The Vaisheshikas disagree. They assert that although the particles of the four elements possess tangibility, they are not body-possessors.

When body-possessor, the reason of the above-cited syllogism, is replaced with 'that which possesses tangibility', the syllogism is as follows: *Regarding the subject, the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent because they possess tangibility.*

Both disputants (the Buddhist challenger and the Vaisheshika respondent) agree that 'that which possesses tangibility' exists – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to the particles of the four elements, for both Buddhists and Vaisheshikas hold that the particles of the four elements 'possess tangibility'.

Similarly, although the Vaisheshikas assert that [single subtle] particles are non-obstructive, like the Buddhists they assert that the meaning of obstructive is to obstruct the position of another physical object.

However, unlike Buddhists, the Vaisheshikas hold that single subtle particles are non-obstructive.

Both Buddhists and Vaisheshikas agree on the meaning of obstructive: 'to obstruct the position of another physical object'. They hold that a pillar, for instance, is obstructive because it occupies space and thus obstructs any other physical object, such as a vase. A pillar obstructs a vase because it prevents the vase from being positioned in the same place as the pillar.

Therefore, regarding the subject, 'that which possesses tangibility', although its name "body-possessor" is – from the perspective of the Vaisheshikas – not established in relation to [the subject] the particles of the four elements, from their perspective, the flaw does not exist that [the reason 'that which possesses tangibility'] is not established as the property of the subject establishing that the particles of the four elements are impermanent. This is because, even if [the reason, body-possessors] is not established [in relation to the subject, the particles of the four elements], from their perspective, it is ascertained that the referent object [of body-possessor: 'that which possesses tangibility'] is only existent – in conformity with the way it is cited – in relation to the subject sought to be known.

From a Buddhist point of view, since the meaning of a body-possessor is 'that which possesses tangibility', "body-possessor" is the name of or term for 'that which possesses



tangibility'.<sup>52</sup> Hence Buddhists assert that both body-possessor (the term) and 'that which possesses tangibility' (the referent object) exist in relation to the particles of the four elements (*i.e.*, the particles of the four elements are body-possessors *and* possess tangibility).

The Vaisheshikas, on the other hand, contend that only the referent object (that which possesses tangibility) exists in relation to the particles of the four elements; the term (body-possessor) does not exist in relation to those particles.

Thus, from the perspective of some Vaisheshikas, although the reason, body-possessors, does not satisfy the property of the subject of the syllogism establishing that the particles of the four elements are impermanent, the reason, 'that which possesses tangibility', does. In other words, the Vaisheshikas contend that the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent, because they are body-possessors*, does not satisfy the first mode of a correct reason, the property of the subject. However, from the perspective of some Vaisheshikas, the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent, because they possess tangibility*, satisfies the property of the subject.

The reason for saying "from the perspective of *some* Vaisheshikas the syllogism satisfies the property of the subject" is as follows: according to Vaisheshika philosophy, the particles of the four elements are permanent. Therefore, in general, the syllogism (*Regarding the subject the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent, because they possess tangibility*) does not satisfy the property of the subject from their perspective, because although the reason exists in relation to the subject, the followers of the Vaisheshika do not wish to realize the syllogism's thesis, *i.e.*, that the particles of the four elements are impermanent. They do not wish to realize that the particles of the four elements are impermanent, for they contend that those particles are permanent.

Yet some Vaisheshikas who have reflected on subtle particles, impermanence, and so forth eventually come to believe that the particles of the four elements are impermanent and develop the wish to realize this (without giving up other assertions characteristic of the Vaisheshika School such as the view that the particles of the four elements are not body-possessors). It is from the perspective of those Vaisheshikas that the syllogism satisfies the property of the subject.

This means that from the perspective of those Vaisheshikas the referent object of "body-possessor", 'that which possesses tangibility', is only existent – in conformity with the way it is cited as a reason – in relation to the particles of the four elements. 'That which possesses tangibility' is *only* existent in relation to the particles of the four elements because the particles of the four elements possess tangibility and because there are no particles of the four elements that do not possess tangibility.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If that [referent object] itself is mistaken, and so forth,  
Even if the term is non-mistaken,  
The proof should be known as flawed,  
Because in dependence on an entity, an entity is established.*

The reason why the meaning of the two verses above is feasible is as follows: **If** the referent object itself **is mistaken**, contradictory or non-established, **and so forth – even if the term** [of that referent object] **is non-mistaken – the proof should be known as flawed**.

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<sup>52</sup> For instance, since 'that which is momentary' is the definition or meaning of impermanent, "impermanent" is the name or term of 'that which is momentary'. Similarly, as 'that which is bulbous, flat-based, and able to perform the function of holding water' is the definition or meaning of vase, "vase" is the name or term of 'that which is bulbous, flatbased, and able to perform the function of holding water'.

This is **because an entity**, a cause or a pervading object, **is established in dependence on an entity**, an effect or a pervaded object [respectively], but a referent object cannot be established merely in dependence on a term.

Here, our own system explains why the above-cited two verses from the *Pramanavarttika* are plausible. (The two verses are: “(1) *If someone does not establish the functioning entity [in relation to the subject] / This is the mode [of the property of the subject not being established for that person]; if he establishes it / Even if he does not establish the specifics, there is no fault. / It is like sound that depends on space. / (2) Although sound is not established, if a functioning thing / Is established [in relation to the subject, the property of the subject] is established. / For example, it is like Buddhists explaining to Ulukas / The proof, body-possessors, and so forth.*”).

These verses are plausible because, if a referent object serves as a wrong reason for one of the three mistaken syllogisms (a *syllogism of non-ascertainment*, a *syllogism of contradiction*, or a *syllogism of non-establishment*) it is flawed with regard to those syllogisms, even if the term of that referent object is not flawed. In other words, if a referent object is unable to establish the thesis of a syllogism, it is not a correct reason of that syllogism, even if the word or term of that referent object is able establish the thesis.

Although a result is able to establish a cause, and a ‘pervaded object’ is able to establish a ‘pervading object’, the term of a referent object is not able to establish its referent object.

A result is able to establish a cause because smoke for instance, as the result, is able to establish the presence of its cause, fire. Smoke is able to establish the presence of fire in dependence on the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, on a smoky mountain pass, there is fire because there is smoke.*

Similarly, a ‘pervaded object’ is able to establish a ‘pervading object’ because the ‘pervaded object’, consciousness for example, serves as a correct reason establishing the ‘pervading object’, impermanence. Consciousness establishes impermanence through the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, an eye consciousness perceiving a table, it is impermanent because it is a consciousness.*

Consciousness is the ‘pervaded object’ and impermanent the ‘pervading object’ because consciousness is *pervaded* by impermanence. Consciousness is pervaded by impermanence, which is a vaster category than consciousness and includes not only consciousness but all other impermanent phenomena such as colors, shape, karmic imprints, and so forth. Therefore, whatever is a consciousness is necessarily pervaded by impermanence since whatever is a consciousness is necessarily impermanent.

Yet, even though a result is able to establish a cause and a ‘pervaded object’ is able to establish a ‘pervading object’, this does not mean that a term is able to establish its referent object.

For instance, the word “table” is unable to establish its referent object, table, since the presence of the word “table” does not require the presence of a table. The following is thus a flawed syllogism: *Regarding the subject, in a classroom in which someone utters the word “table”, there is a table because there is the word “table”.*

The syllogism is flawed because it does not satisfy the forward pervasion. It does not satisfy the forward pervasion, for the word “table” is neither the result nor the ‘pervaded object’ of its referent object, the table. Therefore, wherever there is the word “table” there is not necessarily a table.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*“Because it is a goer” and “because it is an arm-possessor”  
Are the proofs of a “horn-possessing [cow]” and “an elephant”;  
The expressed objects of these words  
Are [through] renown; [one is] not [non-mistaken with regard to] the accepted expressed  
objects.*

For example, citing the following **proofs**: Regarding the subject, a variegated cow, it is **ahorn-possessing** [cow] **because it is a ‘goer’**; **and**: Regarding the subject, **an elephant** calf, it is an elephant **because it is an ‘arm-possessor’**.

Regarding the subject, the **words** “goer” and “arm-possessor” which are terms for horn-possessing [cows] and elephants [respectively], on account of not being non-mistaken with regard to **the** conceived **expressed objects** – horn-possessing [cows] and elephants – one should not apply those terms, because, although one is mistaken with regard to the referent objects, these terms are applied through the power of **renown**. One is **not** non-mistaken with regard to horn-possessing [cows] and elephants which are **accepted** as the **expressed objects** of the two ‘goer’ and ‘arm-possessor’ because one sees animals that are not those two [horn-possessing cows and elephants but who are ‘goers’ and ‘arm-possessors’].

In order to illustrate that terms are unable to establish their referent objects Dharmakirti cites the following wrong syllogisms: *Regarding the subject, a variegated cow, it is a horn-possessing cow, because it is a ‘goer’*, and, *regarding the subject the calf of an elephant, it is an elephant because it is an ‘arm-possessor’*.

In Sanskrit, there are many words for ‘cow’ as well as many words for ‘elephant’. For instance, in Sanskrit, the word “goer” (*go*, *gro ba*) is a term for cows and the word “arm-possessor” (*hastin*, *lag can*) a term for elephants. Cows are called “goers” because they like to walk and roam around. Elephants are called “arm-possessors” on account of their trunk which they use like an arm in order to grasp food, pull heavy loads, scratch themselves, and so forth.

However, even though the expressed or referent objects of the words “goer” and “arm-possessor” are cow and elephant respectively through the power of renown, since those words can cause confusion with regard to the objects to which they refer, our own system advises not to use them when referring to cows and elephants. These words can lead to confusion, for a person who hears them may be mistaken about their referent objects. There are numerous animals that walk and roam around but are not cows. Similarly, there are many animal that possess arms yet are not elephants.

Hence, the two syllogisms (*Regarding the subject, a variegated cow, it is a horn-possessing cow, because it is a ‘goer’*, and, *regarding the subject the calf of an elephant, it is an elephant because it is an ‘arm-possessor’*) are logically flawed since they do not satisfy the forward pervasion. They do not satisfy the forward pervasion because whatever is a ‘goer’ is not necessarily a cow, and whatever is an ‘arm-possessor’ is not necessarily an elephant.

In brief, this outline explains the objectives accomplished by presenting different refutations of a creator God, rebounding arguments, and so forth. One objective is to understand that, in the context of a respondent realizing the three modes of a syllogism’s correct reason, it is the reason’s general entity that is fundamental – not its specifics. It is fundamental because if the respondent does not establish or realize that the general entity of the reason exists in relation to the subject, the syllogism is not a correct syllogism for that respondent. For that respondent it is not a correct syllogism since from his perspective the property of the subject is not established. [*“If someone does not establish the functioning entity [in relation to the subject] / This is the mode [of the property of the subject not being established for that person]; ...”*]

Yet, if the respondent has established or realized that the general entity of the reason exists in relation to the subject – even if he has not realized that any of the specifics of the reason exist in relation to the subject – the fault of the syllogism not satisfying the first mode of the reason from the perspective of that person does not occur. [“... if he establishes it / Even if he does not establish the specifics, there is no fault.”]

Similarly, regarding the general entity of a syllogism’s subject and the specifics of that subject, it is the general entity of the subject that is essential. In the case of the following correct syllogism: *regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product*, the respondent must have realized that the reason, product, exists in relation to the general entity of the subject, sound. It is not necessary for him to have realized that product exists in relation to a specific sound, such as sound that depends on space as asserted by the Vaisheshikas. [It is like sound that depends on space]

The second objective that is accomplished by the above-cited refutations is to understand that, between a term and its referent object, the referent object is of prime importance. Hence, although the subject, sound, is not established or realized as the object that is expressed by the word “product”, if product is realized as existing in relation to sound, it satisfies the property of the subject of the syllogism establishing that sound is impermanent. [Although sound is not established, if the functioning thing / Is established [in relation to the subject, sound, the property of the subject] is established.]

In order to illustrate that between a term and its referent object, the referent object is essential, Dharmakirti provides the example of the following syllogism: *regarding the subject, the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent, because they are body-possessors*. The syllogism is cited by a Buddhist and directed at an Uluka (a Vaisheshika). [For example, it is like Buddhists explaining to Ulukas / The proof, body-possessors, and so forth.]

The proof or reason of the syllogism is “body-possessor”, which, from a Buddhist point of view, is the name or term of ‘that which possesses tangibility’. Buddhists hold that the particles of the four elements are both body-possessors and ‘that which possesses tangibility’. However, according to the Vaisheshikas, although the particles of the four elements are ‘that which possesses tangibility’, they are not body-possessors.

So this syllogism illustrates that of the term (body-possessor) and its referent object (that which possesses tangibility), the referent object is of prime importance, for although Vaisheshikas accept that the referent object exists in relation to the subject (the particles of the four elements), they do not assert that the term exists in relation to that subject.

Thereafter, Dharmakirti explains why the first two verses of this outline are feasible. The verses are feasible because, with regard to a particular thesis, if the referent object constitutes a reason of one of the three wrong syllogisms (a mistaken *sylogism of non-ascertainment*, and so forth), while the term of that referent object is not a mistaken reason, for it is able to establish the thesis, the referent object should be known as a flawed proof or reason with regard to that thesis. This is because even though an entity, a cause and a pervading object, are established in dependence on another entity, an effect and a pervaded object respectively, a referent object cannot be established merely in dependence on its term. [“If only that [referent object] is mistaken, and so forth / Even if the term is non-mistaken / The proof should be known as flawed / Because in dependence on an entity, an entity is established.”]

In order to illustrate that a referent object cannot be established merely in dependence on its term, Dharmakirti cites the following two syllogisms: *Regarding the subject, a variegated cow, it is a horn-possessing cow, because it is a ‘goer’*, and, *regarding the subject the calf of an elephant, it is an elephant because it is an ‘arm-possessor’*.

It is through renown that the objects expressed by the words “goer” and “arm-possessor” are accepted to signify cow and elephant respectively. However, one is easily mistaken with regard to the referent objects of those terms, for there are animals other than cows that are ‘goers’ and animals other than elephants that are ‘arm-possessors’ which is why those terms are unable to establish their referent objects. [*“Because it is a goer” and “because it is an arm-possessor” / Are the proofs of a “horn-possessing [cow]” and “an elephant” / The expressed objects of these words / Are [through] renown; [one is] not [non-mistaken with regard to] the accepted expressed objects*].

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the first objective explained in this outline?
2. In case of a correct syllogism, why is it not necessary to realize that the specifics of the reason exist in relation to the subject?
3. What is ‘sound that depends on space’?
4. Why is it not necessary to realize that the reason exists in relation to the specifics of the syllogism's subject?
5. What is the second objective explained in this outline?
6. What are the six categories of phenomena asserted by the Vaisheshikas/Ulukas?
7. What is the syllogism cited by a Buddhist directed at a Vaisheshika?
8. From the perspective of the Vaisheshikas, does the syllogism, regarding the subject, the particles of the four elements, they are impermanent, because they possess tangibility, satisfy the property of the subject?
9. What is the meaning of ‘body-possessor’ from the point of view of the Vaisheshikas and from a Buddhist point of view?
10. Please cite a syllogism, the reason of which is a result that establishes a cause?
11. Please cite a syllogism, the reason of which is a ‘pervaded object’ that establishes a ‘pervading object’. What is meaning of ‘pervaded object’ and ‘pervading object’?
12. Why is a term unable to establish its referent object?
13. Which of the three modes does the following syllogism not satisfy: *regarding the subject, the calf of an elephant, it is an elephant, because it is an arm-possessor*.
14. Why does our own system advice that the words “goer” and “arm-possessor” should not be used when referring to cows and elephants respectively?

## DEMONSTRATING THAT [ISHVARA] BEING THE CREATOR OF EVERYTHING IS NEGATED BY PRAMANA

This heading is the second of two headings mentioned before(see, page 97). The first heading is:

Demonstrating that the proofs are wrong.

The outlines that pertain to the first heading were set forth above. This outline is twofold:

- (1) It is not correct that permanent [Ishvara] is a cause
- (2) Disposing [of the idea that our objections apply] equally to us

## IT IS NOT CORRECT THAT PERMANENT [ISHVARA] IS A CAUSE

From a Buddhist point of view, it is impossible for a permanent phenomenon to be a cause, because something that is static and unchanging cannot create or generate another phenomenon.

Many non-Buddhist Indian philosophical systems, on the other hand, assert permanent causes. According to them, the various phenomena we perceive and interact with cannot function unless they have a stable, permanent basis.

For instance, if the self or person were not permanent, it could not be born in samsara or attain nirvana. These philosophers argue that if the self were impermanent it would only exist for one moment. A moment later, it would have disintegrated, making it impossible for the self to continue from lifetime to lifetime. How, they reason, could the self or person be the result of a previous life and the cause of a future life, if it were not permanent?

Also, if the self were indeed momentary, it could not accomplish anything during any of its short moments of existence, for it would not be able to engage in any of the activities that are typical for a person.

Similarly, although non-Buddhist Indian philosophers accept that the physical environment, living beings' bodies, sense objects, etc. are impermanent, many of them maintain that those phenomena require a stable, permanent basis. They believe that the world around us, its inhabitants, etc., are composed of, and thus based on, partless and unchanging particles that serve as their building blocks.

According to them, all impermanent phenomena must have a stable and permanent foundation, for otherwise they could not exist.

From a Buddhist point of view the opposite is the case, because impermanent phenomena could not transform and evolve if they depended on such a solid and unchanging basis. Although the environment, our body, and so forth are composed of particles such as molecules, atoms, etc., those particles are neither partless nor permanent; they are ever-changing and made up of parts that are other than themselves, so that (mentally) they can be divided endlessly.

Also, even though the self changes from moment to moment, it exists as a continuum of moments, with former moments giving rise to later ones. If the self were permanent, it would be as if 'frozen in time', unable to move around and act.

Likewise, if a cause were permanent it would never transform, contribute to the production of its results, or gradually go out of existence. It would never generate a result or else it would always do so, without the result ever coming into existence.

Many non-Buddhist Indian philosophers assert that Ishvara, the creator of the world, its inhabitants, and forth, is a permanent cause. As mentioned before, he is described as self-arisen and permanent. Yet he is also considered to be a *functioning thing* (Tib. *dnngos po*). A functioning thing is a phenomenon that creates or generates its own results. From a Buddhist point of view, a functioning thing is necessarily impermanent. However, according to the non-Buddhist Indian systems contending that Ishvara is the creator of everything, Ishvara is both permanent and a functioning thing.

In response to this assertion, our own system sets forth the following debate:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Just as the entity [of Ishvara] is a cause*

*At that time he is a non-cause,*

*[It is not feasible that] at the very [time] he is, owing to whatever [reason], accepted  
To be a cause,[he]not[be] accepted to be a non-cause.*

Setting forth an absurdity:

Regarding the subject, **the entity** of Ishvara (*i.e.*, Ishvara himself), it is not feasible that **at the very time he is, owing to whatever reason, accepted to be a cause**, [he] not [be] accepted to be **a non-cause**. This is because **just as** as he does not shift from being in the nature of a cause, he is accepted to be at that time in the nature of a non-cause.

If Ishvara were a permanent cause, it would absurdly follow that he is both the cause and the non-cause of a particular object. According to those who believe in the creator Ishvara, Ishvara is the cause of rice, for instance, when the rice is growing on the rice paddy. He is the cause of rice since he causes it to grow. Yet, he would also have to be considered to be the *non-cause* of rice when the rice seeds have not yet been planted and the rice paddy lies dormant, because at that time Ishvara does not create any rice.

Therefore, our own system argues: regarding the subject, Ishvara, at the very time he is the cause of rice he would also have to be the non-cause of rice, because he is considered to be permanent and thus does not change from being the cause of rice to the non-cause of rice, or from being the non-cause of rice to the cause of rice.

Those asserting Ishvara cannot argue that Ishvara is the cause of rice when the rice is growing and the non-cause of rice when the rice paddy lies dormant (without simultaneously being both the cause and non-cause of rice), for otherwise they would contradict their original assertion. They would contradict their assertion because it would follow that Ishvara changes from being the cause of rice to not being the cause of rice, and thus not be permanent.

Hence, our own system contends: if Ishvara were a permanent cause, it would follow that he is both the cause *and* the non-cause of rice.

Please note that here 'the entity of Ishvara' ("Regarding the subject, **the entity** of Ishvara...") refers to Ishvara himself. Similarly, when Gyaltsab Je speaks of 'the nature of a cause' and 'the nature of a non-cause' he is referring to a cause and a non-cause respectively, for here, *the nature* of a phenomenon denotes the phenomenon itself ("...**just as** as he does not shift from being in the nature of a cause, he is accepted to be at that time in the nature of a non-cause").

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If in relation to a weapon and medicine, etc.  
Nagpa's wound [is created] and healed,  
Why not conceive of an unrelated log  
As the very cause [of the creation and healing of the wound]?*

If [someone were to say that] there is no pervasion, then **why**, it would follow, is it **not** reasonable to **conceive of an unrelated log** to be **the cause** that cures and generates a wound? It would be reasonable because the former [reason] does not have a pervasion.

It follows it is unreasonable to accept [that an unrelated log is the cause that cures and generates a wound] because it is feasible that the generating and the healing and curing of **Nagpa's wound** [take place] **in relation to a weapon and medicine, etc.** [respectively]; it is not feasible otherwise.

In response to the above debate, an opponent may argue that there is no pervasion. In other words, he may contend that even though Ishvara does not change from being the cause of a phenomenon to being its non-cause, nor from being the non-cause of a phenomenon to being its cause, that does not mean that when Ishvara is the cause of a phenomenon he is also the non-cause of that phenomenon. Ishvara is not also the non-cause of the phenomenon because he is its cause. Therefore, the opponent may respond by saying that although there is no difference between Ishvara the cause and

Ishvara the non-cause of a phenomenon<sup>53</sup>, he is nonetheless the cause of that phenomenon.

If an opponent were to respond in that way, the following question would arise: if a non-cause of a phenomenon can be the cause of that phenomenon, can a totally unrelated object be the cause of a phenomenon?

Here Dharmakirti gives the example of a person called "Nagpa" who was injured and has a wound. The wound was inflicted by a weapon and treated with medicine. That which produced the wound was a weapon, while that which caused the wound to heal was medicine. So the weapon and the medicine are connected to that wound as they were the cause of the wound and the cause of its healing, respectively.

But it would be absurd to assert that a totally unrelated object such as a wooden beam caused or healed Nagpa's wound.

However, our own system argues that if the opponent were to say that there is no pervasion (*i.e.*, that Ishvara is the cause of a phenomenon, although it is impossible to differentiate between Ishvara the cause and Ishvara the non-cause of that phenomenon), it would absurdly follow that it is reasonable to assert that an unrelated log produced or cured Nagpa's wound.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[Since Ishvara and not generating results are] not of a different nature  
It is also not correct that [Ishvara] creates [all results].*

Regarding the subject, [Ishvara], **it is also not correct that** he is the creator of all results, because he is **not of a different nature** than that which does not generate results.

Our own system further argues that Ishvara has not created all results because Ishvara is of the same nature as that which does not generate results.

In general, the cause of a result is *that which generates (or produces) the result*, while the non-cause of a result is *that which does not generate the result*.

Also, an object that is the cause of a result is *of the same nature as* that which is the cause of the result, and an object that is the non-cause of a result is *of the same nature as* that which is the non-cause of the result, because being the cause of a result or being the non-cause of a result are attributes or characteristics of that object, and whatever is an attribute of an object is necessarily *of the same nature as* that object.

Hence, according to our own system, Ishvara is of the same nature as that which does not generate results because he is the non-cause of results. Ishvara is the non-cause of results because, as mentioned above, there is no difference between Ishvara the cause of results and Ishvara the non-cause of results.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since, being permanent, there is no [basis for the] reversal [of generating results]  
It is also difficult to realize the very capacity [for causality].*

**It is also difficult to realize the very capacity** for causality with [Ishvara] assisting results, because **there is no** basis for the **reversal** of generating results in dependence on

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<sup>53</sup>The opponent asserts that there are times when Ishvara is the cause of the phenomenon and times when he is not the cause of the phenomenon. But since Ishvara is permanent he does not change from being a cause of the phenomenon to being its non-cause, and vice versa. Therefore, from the perspective of the opponent, there is no difference between Ishvara the cause and Ishvara the non-cause of a phenomenon.



him ceasing to be an assistant<sup>54</sup>. This is because he is a **permanent** entity. If [Ishvara] is [permanent] it is not possible for there to be no pervasion<sup>55</sup>. Therefore, there is no ascertainment of positive and negative concomitance.

Furthermore, our own system reasons that it is difficult to establish that Ishvara has the capacity to generate results, because there is no basis for reversing a result in dependence on Ishvara no longer serving as the cause of the result. There is no such basis because Ishvara is asserted to be permanent. In other words, if Ishvara were permanent it would be impossible to uphold the relationship between a cause and its result.

The reason for this is as follows: the existence of a result depends on its cause since without a cause a result cannot come into existence. Also, when a phenomenon ceases to generate its result, *i.e.*, when it no longer acts as the cause of that result, the result ceases to exist.

However, if Ishvara were the creator of all results, a result would not cease to exist in dependence on Ishvara no longer serving as the cause of the result. This is because (according to the opponent) Ishvara is unchanging and thus does not cease to be the cause of a result.

Therefore, for instance, rice no longer growing on a rice paddy would not depend on Ishvara no longer serving as the cause of the rice, since Ishvara does not change to no longer causing the growth of the rice.

If Ishvara were permanent, it would not be correct to hold that there is *no* pervasion with regard to the reason cited above (“There is no basis for the reversal of generating results in dependence on Ishvara ceasing to be an assistant, because Ishvara is a permanent entity”). In other words, it would not be correct to say that if Ishvara is permanent it is *not* the case that there is no basis for reversing a result in dependence on Ishvara no longer serving as the cause of the a result.

This is because if Ishvara were permanent, it would not be possible for Ishvara to prevent or assist in the arising of results. Therefore, there would not be a positive or negative concomitance (Tib: *rjes su 'gro ldog*) with regard to the cause, Ishvara, and his result.

Here, positive or negative concomitance with regard to a cause and its result, describes the relationship between a cause and its result. Positive concomitance refers to the fact that when there is a cause its result can arise, while negative concomitance refers to the fact that when there is no cause, its result will not arise.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If one conceives of causes that are different from  
Some [causes] existing [as assistants]  
That [have the capacity to generate] some result,  
every result will have infinite causes.*

Demonstrating *pramana* that harms [objection to] the very pervasion: It follows that every result will have infinite causes, because it is feasible to conceive of the causes of a result

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<sup>54</sup>As explained earlier, an assistant (Tib: *phan byed*) – or that which provides assistance – is another term for ‘cause’. A cause is an assistant (or that which provides assistance) because it contributes to the arising of its result.

<sup>55</sup>In Tibetan, this sentence (“If [Ishvara] is [permanent] it is not possible for there to be no pervasion”) reads: “de yin na des mnon pa mi srid pas”. However, it is not clear what the word “mnon pa” means. Geshe Palden Drakpa, a great contemporary scholar from Drepung Loseling, believes that this is a spelling mistake and that the word should be “ma non pa” with “ma” meaning ‘not’. “Non pa” has many different meanings; it means 1) press, surpress, force, compel, 2) desire, crave, be attached to, and 3) put over, cover with, pervade. Geshe Palden Drakpa suggests that here the meaning of “non pa” is to *pervade*. Since “ma” means “not”, he says that “ma non pa” translates as “is not pervaded” or “no pervasion”.

that are different from some causes – existing as assistants – that [have] the unseen capacity to generate some result.

In response to the above debate, someone may object saying that there is no pervasion (*i.e.*, although there is no basis for the reversal of generating results in dependence on Ishvara stopping to assist those results, this does not mean that it is difficult to realize the very capacity for causality with Ishvara assisting results). In other words, someone may say that although it is not the case that Ishvara's results no longer arise in dependence on Ishvara no longer serving as their cause, this does not mean that Ishvara does not have the capacity to generate results.

In order to refute this objection our own system sets forth the following *pramana* or reasoning<sup>56</sup>: If one were to assert that results do not cease to arise in dependence on their cause (Ishvara, no longer creating those results, it would follow that every result has infinite causes.

For instance, a sprout would not only be the result of a seed, soil, water, etc. but also of all other phenomena. A seed would have infinite causes because any phenomenon could serve as its cause. Any phenomenon could serve as its cause because it would be feasible to conceive of a phenomenon as a cause although that phenomenon is unable to affect the ceasing of its result. If it is unable to affect the ceasing of its result, it also lacks the capacity to generate its result. Yet, if it is considered feasible that a phenomenon is the cause of a result despite its inability to generate or stop its result, any phenomenon could be the cause of a result, since it is not necessary for that phenomenon to have the capacity to produce the result.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why would it follow that Ishvara would have to be both the cause and the non-cause of all results, if he were permanent?
2. Why would it follow that Ishvara would be of one nature with that which does not generate a result, if he were permanent?
3. What is positive or negative concomitance with regard to a cause and its result?
4. Why would it follow that there would be no positive or negative concomitance between the cause, Ishvara, and its results, if Ishvara were permanent?
5. Why would it follow that every result has infinite causes, if Ishvara were permanent?

## DISPOSING [OF THE IDEA THAT OUR OBJECTIONS APPLY] EQUALLY TO US

[Someone:] Well, then, according to you, since there is no difference between soil, and so forth [that generate sprouts] and [soil, and so forth] at a time when they do not generate sprouts, soil, and so forth will not generate sprouts.

In this outline an opponent argues that the above-mentioned objections by our own systems can also be applied to our own assertions. Based on the example of the causes of sprouts, the opponent reasons: regarding the subject, soil, and so forth, they are not the causes of sprouts, because just as there is no difference between Ishvara the cause of results and Ishvara the non-cause of results, there is no difference between, for instance, soil, etc., that are the causes of sprouts, and soil, etc., that are the non-causes of sprouts.

In general, the main causes of sprouts growing in a field are the seeds, soil, water, fertilizer, and warmth. However, the opponent argues that there is no difference

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<sup>56</sup>Please note that here, *pramana* does not mean "valid cognizer" but "reasoning".

between the seeds that have been planted in a field and those that are kept in a storehouse. Similarly, there is no difference between the soil in a field that has been planted with seeds and the soil in a field left fallow. Hence, there is no difference between the soil, seeds, and so forth that generate sprouts and those that do not generate sprouts, which is why, the opponent reasons, soil, and so forth are not the causes of sprouts.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Soil, and so forth, when their nature thoroughly changes  
To generate sprouts, are the causes.  
Because upon performing [field work] well  
One witnesses the features [of the harvest].*

[Response:] It follows that **soil, and so forth** – while not changing – are not the causes of sprouts, because **when their nature thoroughly changes** from [soil, and so forth at] the time when they do not generate sprouts, *then* they **are the causes** that **generatesprouts**. This follows, because **upon performing** field work **well**, excellently ploughing and sowing a field, **one witnessesthe** outstanding **features** of theharvest.

Our own system responds by saying that soil, etc. that generate sprouts are different from soil, etc. that do not generate sprouts. This is because soil on its own, *i.e.*, soil that is not combined with seeds, water, fertilizer, and warmth, does not act as a cause of sprouts, while soil that comes together with those other causes produces sprouts. The same is true for each of the other causes of sprouts; in isolation they do not produce any sprouts but in combination with the others they do.

Therefore, our own system argues that soil which remains on its own (without changing into soil that has come together with the other causes) is not the cause of sprouts. But as soon as it changes from that kind of soil to the soil that is joined by the other causes it becomes the cause of sprouts.

This is illustrated by the example of an abundant harvest, which is only possible if it is preceded by all the essential causes and conditions.<sup>57</sup> If any of those causes and conditions is missing, or of inferior quality, it will affect the resultant quality of the harvest.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If someone says: just as an object and a sense power  
Are the causes of a [sense] awareness [although] there is no difference  
Between them having come together [and not], so too is Ishvara.*

**If someone says: Just as an object and a sense power are the causes of a sense awareness**, although **there is nodifferencebetween them having come together** and not having come together, **so too is Ishvara** [the cause of all results].

Another opponent supports the idea that irrespective of whether a phenomenon has met the other causes necessary for a result to arise or not, it is the cause of and thus generates the result. As an example he cites an observed object and a sense power. He says both are the causes of a sense consciousness – whether the two have come together or not.

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<sup>57</sup>Please note that in general, causes and conditions are equivalent. This means that whatever is a cause is a condition and whatever is a condition is a cause. However, the phrase “causes and conditions” is used in order to indicate that impermanent phenomena are the results of main causes as well as secondary causes. For instance, the main cause of a sprout is a seed, while soil, water, and so forth are the secondary causes. Hence, the seed is referred to as the cause while the soil, and so forth are referred to as the (cooperative) conditions.

This assertion relates in particular to two of the three conditions (Tib: *rkyen gsum*) that are necessary for any of the five sense consciousnesses to arise. The five sense consciousnesses are: eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, and body consciousness.

Each of these sense awarenesses must be preceded by the three conditions:

The observed object condition

The empowering condition

The immediately preceding condition

The observed object condition (Tib: *dmigs rkyen*) refers to the principal object of perception of a sense consciousness. In the case of an eye consciousness apprehending a table, for instance, the table is the principal object of perception of the consciousness. The table is also the direct cause of the eye consciousness and thus exists a moment before that awareness, for it is in dependence on the table that the eye consciousness takes on the aspect of the table, *i.e.*, that the table appears to the consciousness.

Therefore, an eye consciousness comes into existence in dependence on shape and color, an ear consciousness in dependence on sound, a nose consciousness in dependence on smell, a tongue consciousness in dependence on taste, and a body consciousness in dependence on tangible objects.

The empowering condition (Tib: *bdag rkyen*) refers to the *sense power* that is the direct cause of a sense consciousness. It is traditionally described as a subtle physical form that is associated with the sense organs and in dependence on which the sense consciousness is able to perceive its object. The sense power and the observed object condition have to come together or *meet* in order for any of the sense consciousnesses to manifest.

In the case of an eye consciousness apprehending a table, a subtle physical form associated with the eye organ, the 'eye sense power', is the *empowering condition* or the empowering cause that meets with the observed object condition, the table, and is responsible for the eye consciousness' ability to perceive the table. The eye sense power and the table meet in the sense that the table is reflected in the eye sense power (*i.e.*, light waves bounce off the surface of the table and lead to the formation of an image of the table on the eye's retina).

In case of the remaining sense consciousnesses, sound waves meet with the ear sense power located in the ear; odor molecules meet with the nose sense power located in the back of the nose, taste particles meet with the tongue sense power in the tongue (and other parts of the mouth), and texture, temperature, etc. meet with the body sense power that is spread throughout the entire body.

The immediately preceding condition (Tib: *de ma thag rkyen*) is another direct cause of a sense consciousness and refers to the awareness that must precede a sense consciousness. It refers to the consciousness that manifests a moment before the sense consciousness arises.

For instance, the eye consciousness perceiving the table is preceded by an awareness that serves as the cause of the eye consciousness since it is responsible for the eye consciousness manifesting as a luminous and knowing mind. The eye consciousness perceiving the table is luminous because the table appears to it, and it is a knowing mind because it is able to perceive the table. If the eye consciousness were not preceded by a former moment of awareness, it would not be able to manifest as an experiencing and aware entity able to cognize its object. The immediately preceding condition, which serves as a cause of a sense consciousness, can be any immediately preceding

consciousness (mental or sensory) in the mental continuum of the person in which the sense consciousness arises.

In short, a sense consciousness can only arise if it is preceded and directly generated by these three: a sense object, a sense power, and a consciousness.

Returning to the opponent's assertion, the opponent says that there is no difference between the observed object condition and empowering condition that have met and the observed object condition and empowering condition that have not met. Irrespective of whether those two have met or not they produce the resultant sense consciousness.

Taking the example of a table and an eye sense power, the opponent argues that there is no difference between the table that appears to the eye sense power and the table that does not appear to the eye sense power. In both cases, it is the same table. Likewise, there is no difference between the eye sense power to which the table appears and the eye sense power to which the table does not appear. Therefore, since both the table appearing to the eye sense and the eye sense power to which the table appears are the causes of the eye consciousness perceiving the table, there is no reason (according to the opponent) why the other two should not be the causes of that eye consciousness.

By analogy – the opponent argues – Ishvara is the cause of all results although there is no difference between Ishvara the cause of all results and Ishvara the non-cause of all results.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[That] is not [the case], because there is a difference [with regard to being clear or not].*

[Response:] It follows that **it is not** the case that there is no difference between the sense power, etc. [that have come together and the sense power, etc. that have not come together], **because there is a difference** with regard to the sense consciousness being clear and not clear, and so forth.

Our own system disagrees that the observed object and the sense power are the causes of the eye consciousness irrespective of whether they have met or not. This is because, if the observed object and the eye sense power have met, an eye consciousness perceiving a table can arise, whereas if they have not met, such an awareness is impossible.

Furthermore, in the case of the eye consciousness perceiving a table, if the empowering condition (the eye sense power) is close enough to the observed object condition (the table), the two conditions generate an eye consciousness that perceives the table clearly. Yet if they are not close, they produce an eye consciousness that does not have a clear perception of the table. Hence, the quality of the two conditions coming together affects the quality of the sense consciousness' perception.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since they do not have the capacity individually [to generate a sense consciousness]  
[And] there is no difference between the nature [of the conditions coming together or not],  
It follows that even [when the three conditions] have come together, there is no capacity.  
Therefore, the difference is established.*

If that were not so, it would follow that **even** when the three conditions **have come together**, they would **not have the capacity** to generate a sense consciousness, because when they have not come together, the three conditions **individually do not have that capacity**, and **because there is no difference between the nature** of the three conditions that have come together [and the nature of the three conditions that have not come together].

Our own system continues the debate by stating that if it were not the case that the observed object condition and the empowering condition that have met differ from those that have not met, the following absurdity would occur:

It would follow that even when the three conditions have come together they would not generate a sense consciousness, because each of the three conditions on its own is not able to produce that awareness, and because – according to the opponent – there is no difference between the three conditions that have come together and those that have not come together.

**Therefore, a difference** between the three conditions that have come together and the three conditions that have not come together **is established**, because one witnesses the difference between a sense consciousness that has been generated and [one] that has not been generated in dependence on the three conditions having come together or not having come together.

Thus, on the basis of the different reasonings presented above, it is established that there is a difference between the three conditions that have come together and the three conditions that have not come together. The main difference is that in the first case a sense consciousness can come into existence, whereas in the second case it cannot.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Therefore, some do not have the capacity individually.  
When they come together the qualities will become possible;  
They are the causes. Ishvara, and so forth are not.  
Because there is no difference [between Ishvara, etc. and those which do not generate results].*

Regarding the subject, **Ishvara, and so forth**, they **are not** the causes of all results, **because** they and that which does not generate results are not of a **different** nature. It follows that there is a pervasion, because with regard to **some** [phenomena] that **individually do not have the capacity** to generate a common result, **when they have come together** [with the other causes], **the qualities** of the result **will become possible** and **they are the causes** of the common result.

Our own system concludes this outline by presenting a syllogism that would be logically correct if Ishvara and so forth were both a cause and permanent: *regarding the subject, Ishvara, and so forth, they are not the causes of all results, because they are of one nature with that which does not generate results*. The words “and so forth” include the creator God asserted by other spiritual systems, such as Judaism, Christianity, and so forth.

The syllogism has a pervasion, *i.e.*, whatever is of one nature with that which does not generate results is necessarily not the cause of all results. This is because a phenomenon such as a seed in a storehouse, that has not come together with the other causes such as water, warmth, etc., required to produce a common result, a sprout, is not the cause of the sprout, since it is of one nature with *that which does not generate the sprout*. It is of one nature with that which does not generate the sprout, because not generating a sprout is a quality of that seed.

Yet when it does come together with water, warmth and so forth, the seed is the cause of a sprout, for at that time it is of one nature with *that which generates the sprout*. The latter seed is of one nature with that which generates the sprout, because being able to produce a sprout is a quality of that seed – making possible the growth of the sprout and thus the qualities of the sprout.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why does the first opponent in this outline say that owing to our own system's previous objections, it follows that soil, etc. are not the causes of sprouts?
2. What is our own system's response to the first opponent?
3. What is the observed object condition?
4. What is the empowering condition?
5. What is the immediately preceding condition?
6. Why does the second opponent assert that the observed object that has not met with the eye sense power is the cause of an eye consciousness?
7. According to our own system, why is the observed object that has not met with an eye sense power unable to generate an eye consciousness?

## ESTABLISHING THAT THE ONE WHO DIRECTLY COGNIZES THE MODE OF EXISTENCE, THE WAY THEY ABIDE, OF ALL [OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE] IS AN OMNISCIENT ONE

This heading is the second of two headings mentioned before (see, page 89). The first heading is:

Refuting [the idea that Ishvara] who knows how to make all objects of knowledge is an omniscient one

The outlines that are part of the first heading refute the existence of a creator God and were presented above.

The outline that pertains to the second heading can be divided into two:

- (1) Objections
- (2) Refuting [those objections]

## OBJECTIONS

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*"Since a pramana [being] knows hidden objects [and]  
There is also no establishing agent [of omniscience].  
There is no one who earnestly applies [the method]"  
Some clearly expressed thus.*

**Some** Charvakas, Mimamsakas, and so forth say: "In the same way in which you refuted [the existence of] Ishvara, there are similar faults with regard to your omniscient one, because whoever is **a pramana being** necessarily **knows hidden objects** without exception and because there is **also** no method at all **that is an establishing agent** of omniscience through some meditation.

**There is no one who earnestly applies** that method [either], because not only is there no cause that generates [omniscience], there is also not the slightest establishing agent that yields knowledge [of omniscience]. Nor is there anyone who applies himself earnestly to knowing [omniscience]." [Some] **clearly expressed thus.**

Here, Dharmakirti cites the objections of Charvakas, Mimamsakas, and other non-Buddhist Indian philosophers with regard to the Buddhist view of an omniscient Buddha.

Charvakas (Tib. *tshu rol mdzes pa ba, this life happy*), also referred to as Lokayatas (Tib. *rgyang 'phen pa*), are the followers of an ancient Indian school of materialism. They do not accept past and future lives, karma, liberation, or enlightenment. Instead, they believe that wisdom lies in seeking out pleasurable experiences and avoiding unpleasant ones.

Like the Buddhists they reject the existence of a creator God.<sup>58</sup>

Mimamsakas (Tib. *spyod pa ba*) are the followers of an Indian non-Buddhist system, who hold that the Vedic scriptures are valid sources of knowledge because they were not composed by anyone. They believe that whatever appears in the Vedas is reality, so they assert that performing sacrifices and other rituals – as set forth in the Vedas – are the only way to attain higher rebirths.

Yet they do not accept liberation from suffering, for they contend that afflictions are in the nature of the mind and cannot be eliminated. According to them, there is no omniscience because objects of knowledge are limitless.

Although the Mimamsakas assert the existence of Ishvara, they do not hold that he is the creator of the world.<sup>59</sup>

Returning to the objections by the Charvakas, Mimamsakas, etc., they argue that the reasoning adduced by Buddhists to establish that Ishvara is not an omniscient valid cognizer being who knows how to create all phenomena is a reasoning that can equally be applied to the Buddhist assertion that the Buddha is a valid cognizer being who realizes all phenomena.

These opponents assert that an omniscient valid cognizer being is impossible, for such a being would have to realize *all* hidden phenomena<sup>60</sup> (such as phenomena that are far away or as detailed as the exact number of insects), which is impossible.

They further state that there are no methods of meditation that could take a person to omniscience. Therefore, there is no one making a prolonged effort to practice. The reason is that there are no causes that generate omniscience and no establishing agents that yield knowledge of omniscience.

'An establishing agent that yields knowledge' (Tib. *shes byed kyi sgrub byed*) refers to a correct reason that is part of a correct syllogism. A correct reason is an establishing

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<sup>58</sup>For more explanation on the assertions of the Charvakas (Lokayatas) please see, Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkin's *Cutting Through Appearances* [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p. 168 – 170.

Also, Jeffrey Hopkins' *Maps of the Profound: Jam-yang-shay-ba's Great Exposition of Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Views of the Nature of Reality* (a translation of root text with commentaries) [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 237.

<sup>59</sup>For more explanation on the assertions of the Mimamsakas please see, Geshe Lhundup Sopa and Jeffrey Hopkin's *Cutting Through Appearances* [Snow Lion: New York, 1989] p. 166 – 168.

Also, Jeffrey Hopkins' *Maps of the Profound: Jam-yang-shay-ba's Great Exposition of Buddhist and Non-Buddhist Views of the Nature of Reality* (a translation of root text with commentaries) [Snow Lion: New York, 2003] p. 134 – 150.

<sup>60</sup>From a Buddhist point of view, all phenomena can be categorized into: (a) manifest/obvious phenomena, (b) slightly hidden phenomena, and (c) very hidden phenomena. (a) Manifest phenomena are objects which any ordinary person can understand or realize for the first time with direct perception. Examples are shapes, colors, sounds, etc. that can be directly perceived with sense consciousnesses. They are manifest because one does not have to rely on correct syllogisms in order to cognize them. Examples of (b) slightly hidden phenomena are selflessness, impermanence, and so forth. These phenomena are slightly hidden because they can be relatively easily realized in dependence on correct syllogisms. (c) Examples of very hidden phenomena are the subtle workings of karma and the qualities of a Buddha. They are very hidden because only a Buddha can incontrovertibly understand them in all their complexity.

According to these opponents, examples of hidden phenomena include the exact number of insects on this planet, objects located far away from the observer, and so forth.



agent because it logically establishes a syllogism's thesis. It yields knowledge, since a correct reason generates an inferential cognizer realizing the thesis, in the continuum of the person to whom the syllogism is directed.<sup>61</sup>

Thus, 'establishing agents that yield knowledge of omniscience' refer to correct reasons that logically establish the existence of omniscience. According to the opponent, there are no establishing agents that yield knowledge of omniscience, because there are no correct reasons that logically establish omniscience.

Having briefly cited the objections, Gyalsab Je then provides a more extensive explanation to elucidate the reasons for those objections.

The first paragraph sets out why the opponents believe there are no methods to achieve an omniscient mind:

Thus, they say it follows that mantras, medicine, etc. with inconceivable power do not accomplish omniscience, because since those are [used] by all Buddhists and non-Buddhists, it would follow that they all have omniscience.

According to the Charvakas, Mimamsakas, and so forth, there are no methods for attaining omniscience, because if there were such methods they could only be very powerful mantras, medicine, and so forth. However, since there are many Buddhists and non-Buddhists who use such powerful mantras and medicine, it would follow that many of them have attained omniscience.

The remaining paragraphs reveal why the opponents hold that it is not possible for a consciousness to be omniscient:

Sense consciousnesses do not know hidden phenomena, because they do not have the power to engage into [objects] that are obstructed.

Mental consciousnesses are not [omniscient] either, because they follow after sense consciousnesses.

It follows that mental awarenesses that rely on authoritative texts likewise do not know all hidden phenomena, because [words] are not related to the meaning of the words; and even if they were, one would not realize [the meaning] directly.

The opponents argue that there are no omniscient consciousnesses because among the two types of awarenesses – sense- and mental consciousnesses – neither are able to realize all phenomena.

There are no sense consciousnesses that are omniscient, for sense consciousnesses are unable to perceive objects that are obstructed by walls and other hindrances. In other words, the opponent argues that since eye consciousnesses, for instance, are unable to see objects that are not in the sphere of vision of the observers, they are not able to perceive hidden phenomena. The same is true for ear-, nose-, tongue-, and body consciousnesses.

Similarly, the opponents reason that mental consciousnesses are not omniscient since most mental consciousnesses are induced by sense consciousnesses unable to realize hidden phenomena. Most mental consciousnesses are induced by sense consciousnesses because the majority of mental consciousnesses apprehend and think about shapes, colors, sounds, etc. that were previously perceived by sense consciousnesses.

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<sup>61</sup>For instance, in the case of the syllogism: *Regarding the subject sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product*, product is 'the establishing agent that yields knowledge' of sound being impermanent. Product is the syllogism's establishing agent because it is the correct reason that logically establishes or proves that sound is impermanent. Also, product yields knowledge because it generates an inferential cognizer realizing that sound is impermanent in the continuum of the respondent.

The opponents also contend that mental consciousnesses that arise in dependence on authoritative texts, such as the words of the Buddha, do not realize all hidden phenomena, because words are unable to establish the meaning they express. Words are unable to establish the meaning they express, because words do not relate to their referent objects.

The words of the Buddha that set forth impermanence, for instance, cannot be cited as a correct reason that establishes the predicate, impermanence. This is because, as mentioned before, one of the criteria for a correct syllogism is that the reason of the syllogism must be either (a) of one nature with the syllogism's predicate or (b) the result of that predicate. If the reason does not relate to the predicate by way of being either (a) of one nature with it or (b) its result, the reason does not relate to the predicate and thus cannot logically establish it.

Therefore, a mental consciousness that arises in dependence on authoritative texts, such as a teaching by the Buddha on impermanence, does not realize the hidden phenomenon, impermanence, because the Buddha's words cannot establish impermanence.

The opponent goes on to say that even if words *were* to relate to their referent objects, the mental consciousness that arises in dependence on authoritative texts would not be an omniscient consciousness, because it would not be a direct perceiver. It would not be a direct perceiver because it would be a conceptual consciousness.

The reason is as follows: Hypothetically, if words were to relate to their referent objects, the syllogism: *regarding the subject, all conditioned phenomena, they are impermanent, because the Buddha said that they change moment by moment*, would be a correct syllogism. As a result, after having realized the three modes of the syllogism, the respondent would eventually realize the thesis, *i.e.*, he would realize that 'all contaminated phenomena are impermanent'.

Yet that awareness realizing that 'all contaminated phenomena are impermanent' would not be an omniscient consciousness because it would not be a direct perceiver. This is because it would be an inferential cognizer, for it would realize its object in dependence on the syllogism above.

Furthermore, it follows it is not feasible for one to know all [phenomena] in succession, because if that were the case, one must accept there is an exhaustive limit [to phenomena].

If one knew [all phenomena] simultaneously, it would follow that there is a beginning to samsara, because that with regard to which the consciousness is complete is a limit.

The opponent also maintains that omniscience does not exist because it is impossible for an awareness to realize all phenomena. It is impossible since a consciousness does not realize all phenomena successively nor simultaneously.

An awareness does not realize all phenomena in succession because if this were possible, phenomena would not be limitless. Phenomena would not be limitless because there would be a point in time when the omniscient mind had completed the realization of each and every phenomenon.

Similarly, a consciousness does not realize all phenomena simultaneously because if it did, that awareness would reach a limit with regard to what it realizes. Samsara would then have a beginning, for it would be finite in space and time.

One does not realize the existence of such omniscience in dependence on a reason, because there are no reasons other than words, all individuals are non-deceptive with regard to some words, and if they were established to be non-deceptive with regard to all words, they would be omniscient.

If [omniscience] were established by a direct perceiver, [that direct perceiver] would be omniscient. One is not able to ascertain, “this [consciousness] knows all objects of knowledge”, without knowing all objects of knowledge.

Furthermore, the opponents argue that omniscience does not exist because it is not possible for someone who has not yet become a Buddha to realize omniscience. Sentient beings are unable to realize omniscience because they do not realize it in dependence on a correct reason nor with a direct perceiver.

The reason why omniscience cannot be realized in dependence on a correct reason is as follows:

According to the opponent, a reason is only words, because a reason is part of a syllogism cited by a challenger in order to help a respondent to understand reality. Thus, the reason of a syllogism is comprised of words that logically establish a hidden phenomenon.

However, it is impossible for words to establish omniscience. This is because if there were a correct reason that established an omniscient consciousness realizing all phenomena, the reason would not only establish the consciousness but also its object, *all* phenomena. And since a reason is composed of words, the words of all phenomena would have to be cited as the reason. This would imply that the respondent of the syllogism was undeceived with regard to *all* words.

But this is not possible, for although sentient beings are undeceived with regard to some words, they are not undeceived with regard to all words. Only an omniscient one is undeceived with regard to all words.

Please note: to be undeceived with regard to a word means to realize the referent object of that word. Even though sentient beings realize the referent objects of *some* words, they do not realize the referent objects of *all* words. Only a Buddha realizes the referent object of each and every word.

Yet if the respondent had realized the referent object of all words, he would not be the respondent of the syllogism because he would have realized the syllogism’s thesis. He would have realized the thesis since he would have realized omniscience. He would have realized omniscience because he would have realized *all* phenomena. He would have realized all phenomena, for he himself would be omniscient. He would be omniscient because he would have realized the referent objects of all words.

The opponents also claim that in the continuum of sentient beings there are no direct perceivers realizing an omniscient consciousness, because a direct perceiver realizing an omniscient consciousness is necessarily omniscient. According to the opponents, this is because it is not possible to realize *a consciousness* that knows all objects of knowledge, without realizing all objects of knowledge.

Therefore, there is neither a cause generating an omniscient one nor a reason [that yields] knowledge [of an omniscient one].

On the basis of the reasons above, the Charvakas, Mimamsakas, etc., conclude that there can be no omniscient valid cognizer being, for there is neither a cause that gives rise to an omniscient one nor a correct reason establishing him.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Who are the Lokayatas and the Mimamsakas and what do they assert?
2. Why do the Lokayatas, Mimamsakas, etc. assert there are no methods for attaining omniscience?

3. What is 'an establishing agent that yields knowledge? Give an example of such an agent.
4. Why do the opponents hold that there are no methods for attaining omniscience?
5. Why do the opponents say that sense consciousnesses cannot be omniscient?
6. Why do the opponents say that mental consciousnesses cannot be omniscient?
7. Why can authoritative texts not serve as a correct reason establishing a hidden phenomenon?
8. According to the opponents, why does an omniscient consciousness not realize all phenomena in succession nor simultaneously?
9. Why do the opponents assert that omniscience can be realized neither in dependence on a correct reason nor with a direct perceiver?

### REFUTING [THOSE OBJECTIONS]:

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The reason for seeking an omniscient one
- (2) How to seek [an omniscient one]
- (3) Identifying an omniscient one

In response to objections by the Charvakas, etc. Dharmakirti sets forth the following three outlines:

### THE REASON FOR SEEKING AN OMNISCIENT ONE

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Concerned that they are mistaken  
With regard to teaching without knowing,  
They seek someone who has knowledge  
In order to earnestly apply themselves to what he explains.*

Regarding the subject, those striving for release – they have taken as a teacher some person who, **without knowing** the methods to pacify suffering is **teaching** [those methods], and they are **concerned that they are mistaken** [in believing] that [that person] is the perfect teacher – they have a reason to **seek someone who has proper knowledge** of the methods to pacify suffering, because they seek him **in order to earnestly apply themselves to** the goal he **explains**.

In the first outline Dharmakirti explains why practitioners aspiring to attain release (*i.e.*, liberation or Buddhahood) look for a Buddha as teacher.

Here, 'practitioners striving to release' refers to practitioners whose aim is to attain liberation or Buddhahood but who previously relied on a flawed teacher and developed doubt as to whether that person was fully qualified or not. They are aware of the danger inherent in following an incompetent teacher, for it could cause them to engage in harmful practices resulting in future misery. Therefore, such practitioners seek out a valid cognizer being, because, having understood that an omniscient Buddha has complete knowledge of the different practices required to attain liberation or Buddhahood, they are fully committed to following his instructions.

That verse does not mean that those striving for release seek a spiritual teacher out of concern about erring when teaching others owing to not knowing [the methods for pacifying suffering].

Some may misunderstand the meaning of the verse from the *Pramanavarttika* (*Concerned that they are mistaken / With regard to teaching without knowing, / They seek someone who has knowledge / In order to earnestly apply themselves to what he explains*). These lines do not mean that practitioners aspiring to attain liberation or Buddhahood seek a spiritual guide because they are concerned they themselves might give faulty teachings from not knowing the methods to attain release.<sup>62</sup>

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the meaning of 'practitioners striving for release'?
2. What are the dangers of following a teacher who is not qualified?
3. What is the reason why practitioners striving for release seek an omniscient one?

## HOW TO SEEK [AN OMNISCIENT ONE]

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Therefore, one should examine [whether an omniscient one has] pristine wisdom  
Which is the object of accomplishment of those [striving for release].  
That he knows the number of insects  
Is not a requirement for us.*

Considering whether this teacher knows or does not know [the levels] of engaging in and reversing samsara, **one should examine** well whether [this teacher] does or does not have **the pristine wisdom** knowing [those levels], **which is the object of accomplishment** deeply wished for by **those** seeking release,.

Initially, one should not examine whether or not he knows the exact number of insects, because to **us** who are striving for release, whether **he knows exactly the number of insects** is not at all **a requirement for the time being**, and because [we] are striving for release.

Before accepting someone as a spiritual teacher, Buddhist practitioners should mainly check whether that teacher has mastered the levels of engaging in and reversing samsara.

*Engaging in and reversing samsara* (Tib: 'khor ba 'jug ldog) are attributes of the four noble truths. *Engaging in samsara* is an attribute of the truth of suffering and the truth of origin, while *reversing samsara* is an attribute of the truth of cessation and the truth of the path.

The first two truths engage, or keep, sentient beings in samsara. The cause, the truth of origin, gives rise to the result, the truth of suffering. Similarly, the last two truths reverse samsara by way of the truth of the path, as the cause, giving rise to the effect, the truth of cessation.

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<sup>62</sup>The meaning of the verse may be made clearer by adding a few words: *concerned that they are mistaken / With regard to someone teaching without knowing, / practitioners seek a teacher who has knowledge / In order to earnestly apply themselves to what he explains.*

Therefore, practitioners should examine whether a teacher has realized the four noble truths, and how these four account for samsara and nirvana – a realization which practitioners striving for release aspire to attain.

Although possessing any of the different types of clairvoyance<sup>63</sup> is extremely valuable, for it enables a spiritual teacher to benefit others more effectively, in the beginning practitioners should not investigate whether a teacher has those clairvoyant abilities; whether he knows, for instance, the exact number of insects on this planet, or the number of stars in the universe.

The reason is that knowing how many insects there are on this planet, etc. is of little use to us while we seek liberation or the fully enlightened state of a Buddha.

Please note: in this outline, although the author is explicitly explaining how to rely on a spiritual teacher in general, such a teacher should ideally be a valid cognizer being.

[Someone:] Well then, when you examine thus, before you accept someone as a teacher, either you know or do not know whether he has the attribute of knowing [the paths to] purification and release.

If you know, it is pointless to seek [a teacher] since you already know the methods to pacify suffering. If you do not know, then, being unable to distinguish who should and who should not be relied upon, it is acceptable to rely on the first [teacher] you meet.

An opponent argues that it is pointless for practitioners to check whether someone knows the paths to ‘purification and release’ (Tib: *byang grol*) before accepting him as a spiritual teacher. Here, ‘purification’ refers to cleansing obstructions to liberation or omniscience, while ‘release’ refers to deliverance from samsara or nirvana.

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<sup>63</sup>Maitreya’s *Ornament for Clear Realizations* (*Abisamayaalamkara, mngon rtogs rgyan*) sets forth five sublime eyes and six clairvoyances. The five sublime eyes are: (1) the physical sublime eye, (2) the celestial sublime eye, (3) the sublime eye of wisdom, (4) the sublime eye of Dharma, and (5) the sublime eye of a Buddha. The six clairvoyances are: (1) the clairvoyance of magical emanation, (2) the clairvoyance of the celestial ear, (3) the clairvoyance of knowing others’ minds, (4) the clairvoyance of the celestial eye, (5) the clairvoyance of recalling former lives, and (6) the clairvoyance of the removal of defilements.

Gyalsab Je explains in his *Ornament of the Essence* (*rnam bshad snyin po rgyan*): “With regard to [the five sublime eyes]: (1) The physical sublime eye is limited to distinct phenomena; it perceives subtle and coarse visual form within the three-thousand-fold [world system of our universe], [at a distance ranging] from [at least] one hundred yojanas (700km). (2) The celestial sublime eye, which arises from the fruition of previously [accumulated] virtuous contaminated karma, accurately knows the death-transference and rebirth of all sentient beings. (3) The sublime eye of wisdom does not conceptualize true existence with respect to all phenomena but directly realizes the lack of true existence. (4) The sublime eye of Dharma realizes all Arya beings with sharp or weak faculties. (5) The sublime eye of a Buddha is a completely enlightened object-possessor [which realizes] all aspects of all phenomena in accordance with their variations.”

Also: “With regard [to the six clairvoyances]: (1) The clairvoyance of magical emanation possesses special power because it is [a mental consciousness] concomitant with mental stabilization and wisdom, and it is able to move the earth, transform into one, emanate into many, and so forth. This should be applied similarly to [the clairvoyances] below. (2) The clairvoyance of the celestial ear possesses special power because it is [a mental consciousness] concomitant with mental stabilization and wisdom. It hears the faint and loud sounds in all the world systems, pertains to the level of meditative equipoise through the force of meditation, and has as its empowering condition a clear physical form. (3) The clairvoyance of knowing others’ minds [possesses special power because] it is [a mental consciousness] concomitant with mental stabilization and wisdom. It directly and thoroughly knows others’ minds, such as those that have attachment, are free [from attachment], etc. (4) The clairvoyance of recalling former lives [possesses special power because] it is [a mental consciousness concomitant with mental stabilization and wisdom]. It recalls many, such as a hundred, a thousand, etc., lives of oneself and others, through the force of experience. (5) The celestial eye that arises from the manifest compositional action of cultivating a concentration in this life is a clear physical form that pertains to the level of meditative equipoise and comes from meditating on perceiving all coarse and subtle forms that are remote and not remote. The clairvoyance [of a celestial eye] is a mental consciousness concomitant with the two phenomena [mental stabilization and wisdom] that arose from its empowering condition [the celestial eye]. (6) The clairvoyance of the removal of defilements possesses special power because it is [a mental consciousness] concomitant with mental stabilization and wisdom that directly knows the means of eliminating the afflictive and cognitive obstructions and perceives the elimination [of obstructions].”

Checking is pointless, because if the practitioners themselves do not know the paths to liberation or enlightenment, they will not be able to tell whether a spiritual teacher does or not. Being unable to distinguish between a qualified and an unqualified teacher, it may be best for them to rely on the first teacher they come across.

In the case of practitioners who know the paths, there is no need to seek a qualified teacher, for they are able to attain liberation or Buddhahood without the instructions of a teacher. They do not need the instructions of a teacher because they already know the paths to release.

[Response:] There is no fault. This is the way those with discernment seek a spiritual teacher. From the very beginning they know the coarse facts with *pramana* and will come to know the existence of subtler qualities with correctly assuming consciousnesses. Also, they will partially realize [the attributes of a teacher] in dependence on asking others, through what is renowned, and so forth.

Our own system responds by saying that there is no fault with having to examine a person before accepting him as a spiritual teacher, for that does not imply that practitioners need to realize all of the teacher's spiritual qualities and abilities.

Moreover, the explanation in this outline describes how discerning practitioners having an investigative mind seek a teacher.

When those practitioners examine a teacher, their valid cognizers initially come to realize coarse or gross qualities of that teacher. Here, coarse or gross qualities refer to obvious attributes, such as, for instance, his obvious good qualities of body, speech, and mind. In other words, the practitioners' valid cognizers realize the noticeable positive attributes of that potential teacher. In time, their correctly assuming consciousnesses will come to understand his subtler attributes.

As mentioned before, a *pramana* or valid cognizer is defined as 'a knower that is newly non-deceptive'. It refers to a direct perceiver or inferential cognizer newly realizing its main object.

A correctly assuming consciousness – also called 'correct belief' – (Tib: *yid dpyod*) is a conceptual consciousness that correctly perceives its main object *without* being incontrovertible, that is, *without realizing* it. Examples are a conceptual awareness correctly assuming that the Earth is round, a conceptual awareness correctly assuming that conditioned phenomena are impermanent, and so forth. These invaluable awarenesses arise in dependence on correct reasons, personal experience, an explanation given by another person, etc.<sup>64</sup>

In the case of seeking an omniscient one, practitioners generate a partial understanding of a teacher's good qualities by asking other people about him, by checking how well-

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<sup>64</sup>Please note: a correctly assuming consciousness is a conceptual consciousness that apprehends its main object – an existent object. Since its main object exists, a correctly assuming consciousness is a correct awareness. Yet it is not non-deceptive, for it does not realize or incontrovertibly know its main object.

We often think we know something incontrovertibly; we think we have realized it. In reality, we are just drawing a conclusion about a fact because we have heard or read about it and it seems right. Even when we do investigate, we do not take it far enough to arrive at incontrovertible knowledge or realization. Therefore, many of the things we say we know are really no more than the object of a correctly assuming consciousness. Still, even if we do not have incontrovertible knowledge of an object, a correct assumption about it can be extremely beneficial.

Correctly assuming consciousnesses also precede inferential cognition of an object. Before one is able to realize an object (such as impermanence or selflessness) in dependence on a correct reason, one must generate a correctly assuming consciousness perceiving that object.

For more explanation on correctly assuming consciousnesses, please see Lati Rinpoche and Elizabeth Napper's *Mind in Tibetan Buddhism* [Snow Line Publications 1986] p. 22 and 92-99

known and popular he is as a spiritual guide, how many and what kind of disciples he has, and so forth.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why are *engaging in and reversing samsara* attributes of the four noble truths?
2. What qualities should practitioners initially seek in a teacher?
3. How can a clairvoyant teacher benefit his disciples?
4. In this outline, what is the argument presented by an opponent?
5. What is the our own system's response to that argument?
6. What are 'correctly assuming consciousnesses'?

## IDENTIFYING AN OMNISCIENT ONE

This outline concludes the section of the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* that sets forth the first of the five factors according to the *forward sequence*, 'the one who has become a valid cognizer'. It explains that the criterion of omniscience is having perfected the direct realization of all phenomena in general, and most importantly, having directly realized the methods for attaining liberation and Buddhahood.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*The one cognizing the thatness of that which is to be adopted and discarded  
Together with the methods  
Is asserted to be the very pramana;  
Not cognizing all [the numbers of insects].*

Regarding the subject, the Muni, the [Buddha] Bhagavan, it is reasonable to **assert** that he is **a verypamana** [being], because he has carried to its conclusion directly **cognizingthe thatness of that which is to be adopted and discarded** – engaging in and reversing samsara – **together with the methods**.

Merely **cognizingall** the number of insects does **not** fulfill the wishes of those seeking release, because that [knowledge] alone is not required.

Regarding the subject, the Buddha, he is a valid cognizer being, because he has perfected the direct realization of the thatness of 'that which is to be adopted and discarded', *i.e.*, *engaging in and reversing samsara*, together with the methods of *engaging in and reversing samsara*.

'That which is to be adopted and discarded' (Tib: *blang bya dang dor bya*) refers to the four noble truths. The truth of suffering and the truth of origin are 'that which is to be discarded' and the truth of cessation and the truth of the paths 'that which is to be adopted'. The *thatness* of 'that which is to be adopted and discarded' here is *engaging in and reversing samsara*.

Please note that the *thatness* (Tib. *de nyid*) of a phenomenon refers to the attributes of that phenomenon. For instance, impermanence is the thatness of a table because the table is impermanent and selflessness is the thatness of a table because a table is selfless.

Likewise, *engaging and reversing samsara* is the *thatness* of 'that which is to be adopted and discarded' because *engaging in samsara* is an attribute of 'that which is to be discarded', while *reversing samsara* is an attribute of 'that which is to be adopted'. *Engaging in samsara* is an attribute of 'that which is to be discarded' because, as



mentioned above, the truths of suffering and origin ('that which is to be discarded') are that which engages sentient beings in samsara, while *reversing samsara* is an attribute of 'that which is to be adopted' because the truths of cessation and the paths ('that which is to be adopted') are that which reverses samsara.

The *methods for engaging in and reversing samsara* refer to the means by which sentient beings engage in and reverse samsara.

Hence, the Buddha is a valid cognizer being, for he has perfected the direct realization of the four noble truths, of the way those truths account for samsara and nirvana, and of the methods by which sentient beings engage in and reverse samsara.

Having perfected those realizations is one of the main attributes characterizing the Buddha as a valid cognizer being. As mentioned above, realizing the number of insects, etc. on the other hand, is not considered an important ability of an omniscient being, for it is of little use to those wanting to attain liberation or Buddhahood.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Whether or not he can see a long distance,  
Seeing the thatness which is wished for [is the reason for being a teacher].  
If seeing over a long [distance were the definition of a pramana being]  
"Come here! Rely on a vulture!" [would be a reasonable instruction].*

Similarly, regarding that subject, it is reasonable that he is the teacher of those seeking release, **whether or not he can see over a long distance**, because he has carried to conclusion **seeing** the mode of existence of the four truths, **the thatness which is wished for** [by those seeking release].

**If** that were not the case – if merely **seeing over a long** distance fulfilled the definition of a pramana being, then it would be reasonable to instruct those seeking release, **"Come here! Rely on a vulture** as teacher!"

Regarding the subject, the Buddha, he is the teacher of practitioners aspiring to attain liberation or Buddhahood, because – irrespective of whether or not the Buddha is able to see over a long distance, etc. – he has perfected the direct realization of the mode of existence, or thatness, of the four noble truths. As above, the mode of existence or thatness of the four truths here refers to their attributes, such as the fact that the truth of suffering needs to be understood, the truth of origin to be eliminated, the truth of cessation to be actualized, and the truth of the path must be meditated on.

It also refers to the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths: the four aspects of the truth of suffering, the four aspects of the truth of origin, the four aspects of the truth of cessation, and the four aspects of the truth of the path.<sup>65</sup>

Therefore, not only has the Buddha brought to perfection the direct realization of the four noble truths, he has also perfected the direct realization of their different attributes.

Since the Buddha is omniscient, he can also perceive phenomena that are at a great distance. Here again, as with the ability to know the exact number of insects, this ability is not considered as significant as realizing what is necessary to guide others to attain release.

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<sup>65</sup>The four aspects of the truth of suffering are: impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and selflessness. The four aspects of the truth of origin are: cause, origin, strong production, and condition. The four aspects of the truth of cessation are: cessation, pacification, auspicious highness/perfection, and definite emergence. The four aspects of the path are: path, suitability, achiever, and deliverance.

For an explanation of the sixteen aspects please see Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness* [Wisdom Publications, 1983] p. 292-304

However, if the Buddha were a valid cognizer being merely on account of being able to see over a long distance, it would be reasonable to instruct practitioners aspiring to achieve release to rely on a vulture as teacher, for vultures have acute vision and are able to see objects far away.

Therefore, others assert that the meaning of omniscience is being able to make all [things]. It accords with the way the term “omniscience” is uttered in the world as regards knowing how to create a lot of things; for instance, drawing, blacksmithing, tailoring, and so forth.

For non-Buddhist Indian philosophers who assert Ishvara to be the creator of everything, Ishvara is omniscient not only because he knows all phenomena but also because he knows how to *create* everything. The way those philosophers use the term “omniscient” or “all-knowing” is similar to the way it is used in the world to describe someone very skilled and adept at creating things; for instance someone who can draw anything, or a very skilful mechanic, and so forth.

If the creator of everything were omniscient, he would have also created the sufferings of the lower realms, and so forth.

Thus, having fully established that karma and afflictions are merely imputed to be “omniscient”, the Expert in Reasoning teaches that the one who realizes the mode of existence of objects of knowledge [in accordance with] the way they abide is omniscient.

The Expert in Reasoning (Tib. *rigs pa mkhyen pa*) here is Dharmakirti. According to Dharmakirti, if Ishvara were omniscient – using the term “omniscient” the way non-Buddhist philosophers use it to refer to a creator – he would have created all the problems and misery of this world; in particular, he would have created the unbearable sufferings of the lower realms.

Therefore, having established that karma and afflictions are just called “omniscient” Dharmakirti teaches that only one who directly realizes the mode of existence, namely the different attributes of each and every phenomenon in keeping with the way phenomena exist – he alone is omniscient.

Karma and afflictions are called “omniscient” or “creator” because karma and afflictions give rise to samsara. Positive karma that is induced by the affliction of attachment, for instance, creates positive situations, experiences, etc., while negative karma induced by aversion creates negative outcomes.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. To what does ‘that which is to be adopted and discarded’ refer?
2. To what does the thatness of a phenomenon refer?
3. Give examples of methods of *engaging and reversing samsara*.
4. What is the meaning of the word “omniscient” according to non-Buddhist Indian philosophers who assert Ishvara to be the creator of everything?
5. From a Buddhist point of view, why are karma and afflictions called “omniscient” or “creator”?

## IDENTIFYING THE DEFINITION OF A PRAMANA BEING BY WAY OF EXPLAINING THE FOUR [FACTORS]

This heading is the second of three headings mentioned above (see page 28). The first heading is:

Identifying the instance of a *pramana being* by way of explaining the meaning of ‘the one who has become *pramana*’

The third heading is:

Identifying the paths that lead to [the state of being a *pramana being*].

The outlines that are part of the first heading provide an extensive explanation of the first of the five factors according to the *forward sequence*: ‘the one who has become a valid cognizer being’. The outlines pertaining to the second heading set forth the remaining four factors (the one wishing to benefit migrators, “the teacher”, “the sugata”, and “the protector”). The outlines pertaining to the third heading are explained below.

The outline that pertains to the second heading can be divided into two:

- (1) Establishing the four characteristics
- (2) Establishing in dependence on those [four characteristics] that [the Buddha is] *pramana*

## ESTABLISHING THE FOUR CHARACTERISTICS

Here the four characteristics refer to the last four of the five factors according to the *forward sequence* (the one wishing to benefit migrators, and so forth)

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Identifying the excellent intention
- (2) How the excellent application is generated in dependence on that [excellent intention]
- (3) How to establish the excellent results in dependence on those two

## IDENTIFYING THE EXCELLENT INTENTION

As mentioned above, the excellent intention refers to great compassion, *i.e.*, ‘the one wishing to benefit migrators’, which is the first of the last four factors (according to the *forward sequence*).

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Indicating that the excellent intention is the first establishing agent
- (2) Disposing [of the idea that the excellent intention] is not established

## INDICATING THAT THE EXCELLENT INTENTION IS THE FIRST ESTABLISHING AGENT

In this outline Dharmakirti reveals why great compassion is described as *the first establishing agent*.

As mentioned above, the term *establishing agent* (Tib: *sgrub byed*) has two meanings: It refers (a) to an awareness serving as the accomplishing cause of spiritual goals such as liberation and Buddhahood, or (b) to a correct reason that is part of a correct syllogism establishing a thesis.

Here, Dharmakirti explains that great compassion is described as the ‘first establishing agent’ because it satisfies both meanings: great compassion is the first of the last four factors accomplishing the state of a valid cognizer being, for it is through generating great compassion that practitioners of the Mahayana awaken their Mahayana potential (Tib: *theg chen gyi rigs*) and eventually attain Buddhahood. It is only after they have generated great compassion that practitioners develop the second of the last four factors, “the teacher”.

Also, according to the *forward sequence*, great compassion is the first correct reason of the last four factors that is cited in order to establish ‘the one who has become a valid cognizer being’ (the first of the five factors).

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Through familiarization with the establishing agent, compassion, that [arises].*

In order for great **compassion** to act as **the establishing agent** of a valid cognizer being, it has to precede [the remaining four factors] because compassion wishing for all [sentient beings] to be released [from suffering] needs to be generated first. After that, “the teacher” must be developed **through familiarization with** the methods for pacifying suffering.

Great compassion is the establishing factor of a valid cognizer being because it serves as the accomplishing cause of an Arya Buddha. It serves as the accomplishing cause of an Arya Buddha, because for practitioners of the Mahayana to generate Bodhicitta and enter the Mahayana path, they first need to generate great compassion.

Great compassion is defined as a loving attitude wishing for all sentient beings to be free from suffering. The first time practitioners generate such an awareness marks the awakening of their Buddha-nature.

Great compassion is preceded by *affectionate love*, which is described as a caring affection that finds all sentient beings endearing and feels close to them.

The Buddha set forth two methods for generating affectionate love:

1. Sequentially generating the following three awarenesses: a mind understanding that all sentient beings have been one’s mother, a mind remembering their kindness, and a mind wishing to repay their kindness
2. Generating a mind that equalizes and exchanges self and others

In dependence on these two methods, practitioners cultivate affectionate love (the caring affection that finds all sentient being endearing and feels close to them).<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup>Please note that although the three awarenesses: (1) understanding that all sentient beings have been one’s mother, (2) remembering their kindness, and (3) wishing to repay their kindness are part of the *seven-fold cause and effect method* which is one of the methods for cultivating Bodhicitta, there is no contradiction in those three also serving as a method for generating affectionate love. This is because affectionate love is one of the six causes of the *seven-fold cause and effect method*, and it arises as a result of the first three.

Similarly, *equalizing and exchanging self and others* is another method for developing Bodhicitta. Yet this does not contradict the fact that ‘equalizing and exchanging self and others’ is also a method for cultivating affectionate love, for affectionate love is part of *equalizing and exchanging self and others*, and it is a direct result of ‘equalizing and exchanging self and others’.

Lama Tsongkhapa says in his *Illumination of the Thought (dgongs pa rab gsal)*: “With regard to the method for generating affection, there appear to be two traditions of the learned masters. [Of these,] the first is explained by Chandrakirti in his commentary on the *Four Hundred Stanzas*, where he explains how when one has contemplated that all sentient beings have been one’s kin – such as one’s parents – since beginningless time, one will then find the forbearance to plunge into samsara to release them. This was taught by the great being Chandragomin and by the learned master Kamalashila as well. The second approach is the tradition of glorious Shantideva. This I have already explained elsewhere, from where you should understand it.”

For an explanation of the methods known as *seven-fold cause and effect* and *equalizing and exchanging self and others* see Lama Tsongkhapa’s *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment (Lam Rim Chenmo)* Vol. II [Snow Lion Publications 2000] p. 27-49 and p. 51-60.

Thereafter, having reflected on the different types of suffering sentient beings have to endure, practitioners develop great compassion (the loving attitude wishing for all sentient beings to be free from suffering).

Through familiarizing themselves with great compassion and strengthening it, practitioners go on to generate the *special attitude*, which is the aspiration to free all sentient beings from suffering *oneself*.

Understanding that as long as one has not reached the omniscient state of a Buddha, there is little one can do to guide sentient beings out of their desolate and limited condition, one eventually generates Bodhicitta, an awareness aspiring to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Bodhicitta is the entryway to the Mahayana, for it is the criterion that determines whether a person is on the Mahayana path or not. The first time practitioners generate Bodhicitta, they enter the Mahayana path and become Bodhisattvas.

Therefore, great compassion is instrumental in awakening one's Mahayana potential and embarking on the Mahayana path; of the five factors, it is generated first.

After practitioners have generated great compassion, they develop the special attitude and subsequently Bodhicitta. Having entered the Mahayana path, they continue to familiarize themselves with great compassion and the methods for alleviating the suffering of all sentient beings. Familiarity of those then yields the wisdom realizing selflessness: "the teacher". This is expressed by Gyaltsab Je when he says, in the ***Elucidation of the Path to Liberation***: "After that, through familiarization with the methods for pacifying suffering, "the teacher" must be developed."

Please note: in general, the order in which great compassion and the wisdom realizing selflessness are newly cultivated depends on the practitioner's mental capacity.

A person with what is referred to as "dull faculties" (Tib: *dbang rtul*) first generates great compassion and then the wisdom realizing selflessness. A person with dull faculties is described as someone whose power of reasoning is weak and who does not engage in much reflection and analysis, in particular of Buddhist concepts.

On the other hand, a person with "sharp faculties" (Tib: *dbang rnon*), is someone with a sharp mind who reflects and analyses extensively, and will cultivate great compassion (as well as Bodhicitta) only after having realized selflessness.

Practitioners with discernment and analytical skills do not exert themselves to cultivate great compassion – the loving attitude that wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering – until they have realized that irrevocable freedom from suffering is possible. This realization is unattainable unless selflessness has been realized.

The reason is as follows: By reflecting on the different types of suffering (the three, six, eight types<sup>67</sup> and so forth), practitioners with sharp faculties come to comprehend that *pervasive conditioned suffering*, in particular, which serves as a basis of the other types of suffering, cannot be removed in the same the way as a splinter is extracted from the sole of the foot.

They realize that suffering can only be overcome by eliminating its causes. By analyzing the causes of suffering, practitioners with sharp faculties come to understand that the different types of suffering are the result of contaminated karma and afflictions. In other words, they come to realize that the different types of suffering are the result of contaminated karmic actions, which in turn are the result of afflictions such as attachment, anger, arrogance, and so on and that afflictions such as anger, etc., are the result of and are thus induced by the root affliction, ignorance grasping at a self.

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<sup>67</sup>For a description of the three, six, and eight types of suffering please see Lama Tsongkhapa's ***Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment (Lam Rim Chenmo)*** Vol. I [Snow Lion Publications, 2000] p. 289-292, p. 281-287, and p. 265-280

According to the Sautrantika School (the perspective from which the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is set forth) ignorance grasping at a self refers to the misperception apprehending a self-sufficient, substantially existent self.<sup>68</sup>

In order to eliminate that self-grasping misperception so as to prevent the other afflictions, contaminated karma, and the different types of suffering from arising, practitioners examine the misperception by investigating whether its object, a self-sufficient substantially existent self, really exists.

In reliance on correct syllogisms, they eventually reach the conclusion that such a self is impossible by realizing the *absence* of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self. In dependence on a syllogism's correct reason, they attain an inferential cognizer realizing selflessness.

Practitioners also come to understand that the self-grasping ignorance can only be removed by familiarizing themselves with the conceptual realization of selflessness until it becomes a direct realization of selflessness which can proceed to gradually eliminate the root ignorance.

Having realized that elimination of the root ignorance removes the other afflictions as well as the different types of suffering, practitioners with sharp faculties then make an effort to generate compassion.

This is described by Kamalashila in his *Commentary on (Shantarakshita's) Ornament of the Middle Way (Madhyamikalamkarapanjika, bdu ma rgyan gyi rtsa 'grel)*:

*Seeking knowledge of the correct [view] having preceded [great compassion and Bodhicitta];  
Having well ascertained the ultimate,  
With regard to the world abiding in the darkness of the perverted view  
Compassion is generated towards all.*

Although those practitioners generate the wisdom realizing selflessness before cultivating great compassion, this does not contradict the fact that they generate *the wisdom realizing selflessness that is "the teacher"* only after having attained great compassion.

This is because there is a difference between the wisdom realizing selflessness and the wisdom realizing selflessness that is "the teacher". The wisdom realizing selflessness that is "the teacher" refers to a wisdom realizing selflessness that is conjoined with or affected by Bodhicitta, *i.e.*, the awareness aspiring to attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings. Therefore, it only arises in the continuum of a Bodhisattva after great compassion has been generated (which is one of the causes of Bodhicitta).

This is indicated at the beginning of the second chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* when Gyaltsab Je says: "[Excellent] application refers to "the teacher": [an awareness] familiarizing itself, for the sake of others, with the wisdom realizing selflessness".

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<sup>68</sup> Ignorance apprehending a self-sufficient, substantially existent self perceives the self to exist either entirely independently of the five aggregates or else to be connected to the five. In both cases, the awareness conceives the existence of a separate self to which the mind and body belong, as if it were their owner or governor, and as something that has a different character than the mind and body and which possesses, controls, and utilizes them, with the thought, "mine". There may even be a sense that one's own mind and body could be exchanged for another person's mind and body, *i.e.*, that one's self could become the owner of another person's psycho-physical aggregates.

From a Buddhist point of view, a self-sufficient, substantially existent self is impossible because an 'owner' of mind and body that possesses, controls, and utilizes them cannot be found. Furthermore, it is not possible to extract one person's self and exchange his mind and body for someone else's mind and body, since a person's self is characterized by his own psycho-physical aggregates. Therefore, according to the Sautrantika School, subtle selflessness refers to the *lack* of a self-sufficient, substantially existent self.

Please note: there is a slight difference with regard to the interpretation of the word “that” of the line of the *Pramanavarttika* from this outline (“*Through familiarization with the establishing agent, compassion, that [arises].*”).

According to Gyaltsab Je, the word “that” refers to *the wisdom realizing selflessness that is “the teacher”*. Practitioners’ familiarization with great compassion, an establishing agent, results in the arising of “the teacher” (the wisdom realizing selflessness in the continuum of Bodhisattvas). In turn, this wisdom engenders the remaining two of the last four, “the sugata” and “the protector”, and thus gives rise to a valid cognizer being.

According to Khedrup Je’s *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning* (*tshad ma rnam ‘grel tik chen rigs pa’i rgya tsho*) and Gyalwa Gendun Drup’s *Eloquent Presentation of the Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam ‘grel legs bshad pa*)<sup>69</sup>, the word “that” refers to a valid cognizer being. Therefore, in order to accomplish the state of a valid cognizer being, practitioners need to familiarize their mental continuum with great compassion, because, if they are not working to develop the loving attitude that wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering, practitioners are not engaging in the methods for attaining the omniscient state of a Buddha.

Regarding the subject, great compassion, it does not arise without a cause nor from a discordant cause, because it is established in dependence on familiarization with an earlier continuum of a similar type as itself.

Having explained that great compassion gives rise to *the wisdom realizing selflessness that is “the teacher”*, this paragraph reveals how practitioners cultivate great compassion:

Great compassion is defined as ‘a loving attitude that wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering’. It is not *self-arisen*, for it does not arise spontaneously without depending on causes and conditions. Instead, great compassion is the result of extensive and prolonged familiarization – through analysis and meditation possibly over many lifetimes – with those causes and conditions.

In order to develop great compassion it is crucial to cultivate an understanding of the existence of past and future lives. This is because practitioners need to familiarize their mental continuum with the methods for cultivating affectionate love, great compassion, the special attitude, and Bodhicitta.

As mentioned above, the Buddha described two methods for generating those awarenesses. The two methods are explained separately but combined in practice. Although an understanding of reincarnation is not required in order to practice the method of *equalizing and exchanging self and others*, it is necessary in order to meditate on the second method: (a) *understanding that all sentient beings have been one’s mother*, (b) *remembering their kindness*, and (c) *wishing to repay their kindness*. Comprehension of the existence of past lives is particularly important with regard to generating the mind understanding that all sentient beings have been one’s mother. Such an awareness arises through cognizing the fact that one has been taking birth in samsara since beginningless time that each and every sentient being has been one’s mother limitless times.

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<sup>69</sup>Gyalwa Gendun Drup (1391-1474) is considered to be the first Dalai Lama, although the title was attributed posthumously, in the time of the third Dalai Lama, Sonam Gyatso (1543-1588). Gyalwa Gendun Drup was born near Sakya in the Tsang region of Tibet, became a monk when he was seven and received an extensive education in Buddhist philosophy at Narthang Monastery. At the age of twenty he became a disciple of Lama Tsongkhapa. Gyalwa Gendun Drup became widely renowned as an esteemed scholar and practitioner. He founded Tashi Lhunpo, later the seat of the Panchen Lamas. One of his compositions is the *Eloquent Presentation of the Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam ‘grel legs bshad pa*), a word-for-word commentary on the first and second chapters of the *Pramanavarttika*. Another commentary he composed on the *Pramanavarttika* is his *Ornament for Pramana* (*tshad ma rigs rgyan*).

Therefore, the presentation of compassion is followed by an extensive presentation of past and future lives.

In general, great compassion does not arise from discordant causes and conditions such as aversion, resentment, jealousy, and so forth. It emerges from familiarizing one's mental continuum with a continuum of preceding awarenesses of a similar type (Tib. *rigs 'dra ba*) as compassion.

Here, awarenesses of a similar type as compassion are consciousnesses that have the potential to generate or produce 'a loving attitude that wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering'. Examples are the mind that understands that all sentient beings have been one's mother, the mind that reflects on the different types of suffering, and so forth.

Practitioners first contemplate and reflect on those awarenesses until they are able to generate affectionate love, etc. in their mental continuum. Thereafter, they need to familiarize themselves with those newly generated consciousnesses. Such familiarity is achieved by repeatedly and continuously generating the mind that understands that all sentient beings have been one's mother, the awareness of the disadvantages of self-centeredness, and so forth, until these awarenesses arise spontaneously and have a strong impact on practitioners' actions of body, speech, and mind. Along with prolonged and intense reflection on the different types of suffering sentient beings have to endure, this familiarity eventually induces great compassion.

However, as ordinary beings we are deeply accustomed to being attached to our own self and what we consider 'mine', such as our body, family, possessions, and so forth. Since we are strongly habituated to having a self-centered attitude (the result of attachment to our self), it is extremely difficult, initially, to change from a mind that focuses exclusively on the wellbeing of I and mine, to a mind that focuses on the wellbeing of all other sentient beings. This is why it usually takes many lifetimes to cultivate great compassion.

There is some debate as to whether great compassion arises only in the continuum of practitioners of the Mahayana or whether it is also cultivated by practitioners of the Hinayana, *i.e.* Hearers and Solitary Realizers.

Some scholars hold that although Hearers and Solitary Realizers generate the loving attitude that wishes for *numerous* sentient beings to be free from suffering, they do not generate such an attitude wishing for *all* sentient beings to be free from suffering. In other words, even though those practitioners have compassion, their aspiration for sentient beings to be free from the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change, and the pervasive conditioned suffering does not focus on *all* sentient beings and thus does not qualify to be called "*great compassion*".

This assertion is based on the ***Sutra of the Samadhi that Collects all Arya Merits (Sarvapunyasamucchayasamadhisutra, bsod nams thams cad bsodus pa'i ting nge 'dzin gyi mdo)***<sup>70</sup>

Other scholars disagree, arguing that there are two types of great compassion: (1) the loving attitude that merely wishes for all sentient beings to be free from suffering and (2) the loving attitude that wishes for oneself to be able to free all sentient beings from suffering. The second type differs from the first type in that it involves taking personal responsibility for the well-being of all sentient beings. Bodhisattvas have both types of great compassion, while Hearers and Solitary Realizers only have the first type.

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<sup>70</sup>The *Sutra of the Samadhi that Collects all Arya Merits* says:

"Likewise, there are love or compassion that are neither great love nor great compassion [respectively], for whatever is great love or great compassion does not exist in [the mental continuum] of all Hearers and Solitary Realizers."



Please note: the second type of great compassion is different from the *special attitude* that thinks, 'I myself will free all sentient beings from suffering'. This is because the second type of great compassion only *wishes* for oneself to be able to liberate all sentient beings from suffering, whereas the special attitude is *determined* that one will free all sentient beings by oneself.

The scholars who hold that Hearers and Solitary Realizers have great compassion base their assertion on the *Questions of Sagara Mati Sutra (Sagaramatiparipriccha Sutra, blo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa'i mdo)*<sup>71</sup>.

Great compassion itself is the initial establishing agent that meditates on the Mahayana paths. Also, with regard to establishing "the protector", which is the 'object that is to be established' of the [fourth] reason, this [compassion] is established first. The way in which this is so will be explained below.

In short, among the last four factors, great compassion is the first establishing agent, because according to the *forward sequence*, great compassion is both (a) the first accomplishing cause and (b) the first correct reason.

Great compassion is (a) the first accomplishing cause of a valid cognizer being because it is the first awareness that meditates on the Mahayana paths. Great compassion is the first awareness that meditates on the Mahayana paths since, as mentioned above, great compassion marks the awakening of the Mahayana potential or Buddha nature.

Also, great compassion is (b) the first correct reason according to the *forward sequence*.<sup>72</sup> As explained at the beginning of the second chapter of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*, the *forward sequence* refers to the sequence of five factors as presented in Dignaga's two lines of homage ('To the one who has become a valid cognizer, the one wishing to benefit migrators / To "the teacher", "the sugata", "the protector", I bow down.'). Thus, the sequence of the five according to the *forward sequence* is: (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer, (b) the one wishing to benefit migrators, i.e., great compassion, (c) "the teacher", (d) "the sugata" and (e) "the protector".

The last four factors establish the first factor. This means that (b) great compassion, (c) "the teacher", (d) "the sugata", and (e) "the protector" are the correct reasons that establish that the Buddha is (a) the one who has become a valid cognizer being.

The way in which the four factors establish that the Buddha is a *valid cognizer being* is as follows: first, (the second factor) great compassion is established. Thereafter, great compassion serves as the correct reason that establishes (the third factor) "the teacher"; "the teacher" serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fourth factor) "the

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<sup>71</sup>Lama Tsongkhapa explains in his *Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment (Lam Rim Chenmo)* [Snow Lion: New York, 2004] Vol. II, p. 33:

The *Questions of Sagaramati Sutra* states: "Suppose, Sugaramati, a householder or a merchant had only one son, and his son was attractive, beloved, appealing, and pleasing. Suppose that because the son was young and playful, he fell into a pit of filth. When his mother and relatives noticed that he had fallen into it, they cried out, lamented, and grieved, but they did not enter the pit and take him out. When the boy's father arrived and saw that his son had fallen into this pit of filth, his only thought was to save him, and without revulsion, he jumped into the pit of filth and pulled him out." To make the connection between the meaning and the parts of the analogy, the pit of filth represents the three realms; the only child represents sentient beings; the mother and other relatives represent shravakas and pratyekabuddhas who see beings fall into cyclic existence but are not able to save them. The merchant or householder represents the bodhisattva. This is saying that shravakas and pratyekabuddhas have the compassion which is like that of a mother for her beloved only son who has fallen into a pit of filth.

<sup>72</sup>According to those scholars who hold that Hearers and Solitary Realizers have great compassion, the compassion that is the first accomplishing cause of a valid cognizer being and the first correct reason establishing a valid cognizer being refers to great compassion that takes personal responsibility for the well-being of sentient beings, i.e., it refers to the loving attitude that wishes for oneself to be able to free all sentient beings from suffering.

sugata”; “the sugata” serves as the correct reason that establishes (the fifth factor) “the protector”; and “the protector” serves as the correct reason that establishes the main object to be established: (the first factor) the *valid cognizer being*. Hence, there are five syllogisms according to the *forward sequence*. This is explained in more detail below.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the definition of great compassion?
2. Why does great compassion mark the awakening of practitioners’ Mahayana potential?
3. Which awareness precedes great compassion as part of the process of generating Bodhicitta?
4. Which awareness arises subsequent to great compassion as part of the process of generating Bodhicitta?
5. What is the meaning of the special attitude and affectionate love?
6. Of the last four factors of the *forward sequence*, to what factor does familiarity with great compassion lead?
7. In what order does one generate great compassion and the wisdom realizing selflessness?
8. Why does a person with sharp faculties realize selflessness before generating great compassion?
9. What is the difference between the wisdom realizing selflessness and the wisdom realizing the selflessness that is “the teacher”?
10. Why does it usually take many lifetimes to cultivate great compassion?
11. Among the last four factors according to the *forward sequence*, why is great compassion described as the first accomplishing cause?
12. Among the last four factors according to the *forward sequence*, why is great compassion described as the first correct reason?

## DISPOSING OF THE IDEA THAT THE EXCELLENT INTENTION IS NOT ESTABLISHED

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Objection
- (2) Refuting that [objection]

## OBJECTION

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

[The Lokayatas] say: “Since awareness depends on the body, [Compassion] is not established by familiarization”.

The Lokayatas say: “Compassion **is not established by familiarization** through many lives, because there are not many past and future lives. This follows, because, **since** the conceptual mental **awareness depends on the body**, when the body has disintegrated the conceptual mental awareness disintegrates. For example, [the conceptual mental awareness is] the result of the body, as light [is the result of] a lamp; or [the conceptual

mental awareness is] a quality of the body, as [the capacity] to intoxicate [is a quality] of liquor; or [the conceptual mental awareness] is naturally based on [the body], like a wall and the drawing that is based on it.”

In response to our own system asserting that great compassion is cultivated over many lifetimes, the Lokayatas, who do not believe in past and future lives, set forth the following objection:

They argue that great compassion is not cultivated over *many* lifetimes since there are not *many* past and future lives. There are not many past and future lives, for past and future lives do not exist. This is because there is nothing that continues from one life to the next.

The Lokayatas say that the conceptual mental awareness (as asserted by Buddhists) does not continue to a future life because it depends on the body. Therefore, when the body’s heartbeat, breathing, blood circulation etc. cease at the time of death and the body starts to decay, the mind also stops functioning and disintegrates.

Please note: the conceptual mental awareness (Tib: *yid blo rtog pa*) refers to the conceptual consciousness which, among the sense and mental consciousnesses, is necessarily a mental consciousness. It is the conceptual mental awareness that continues from lifetime to lifetime.

However, the Lokayatas argue that the conceptual mental awareness does not separate from and leave the body, for it cannot exist without the body. They present three possibilities for the way in which the conceptual mental awareness depends on the body:

- a) The conceptual mental awareness depends on the body by way of being the result of the body and arises from it, like a light arises from its cause, a lamp. Hence, the conceptual mental awareness cannot exist without the body, for a result cannot exist without its cause.
- b) Or, the conceptual mental awareness depends on the body by way of being a quality or attribute of the body, like the capacity to intoxicate is an attribute of liquor. So the conceptual mental awareness cannot exist without the body, since an attribute cannot exist without the phenomenon on which it is based.
- c) Or, the conceptual mental awareness depends on the body by way of being a part of the body, like a mural is part of a wall. This means that the conceptual mental awareness cannot exist without the body since a part cannot exist without its part-possessor, *i.e.*, the phenomenon of which it is a part.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why do the Lokayatas not assert past and future lives?
2. What is a ‘conceptual mental awareness’?
3. What are the three possibilities offered by the Lokayatas for the relationship between the conceptual mental awareness and the body?

## REFUTING THAT [OBJECTION]

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting [the idea] that it is impossible to become familiar [with great compassion] over many lifetimes
- (2) Refuting [the idea] that, [even] if such familiarity is possible, it is not feasible for [great compassion] to increase limitlessly

## REFUTING [THE IDEA] THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BECOME FAMILIAR [WITH GREAT COMPASSION] OVER MANY LIFETIMES

[This is divided into:]

- (1) A brief demonstration
- (2) An extensive explanation

## A BRIEF DEMONSTRATION

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

[*This*] is not [so], because [*the body being*] the base has been negated.

Regarding the subject, the conceptual mental awareness, the body **is not** its base [by way] of being a substantial cause or special cooperative condition, **because** being such a **base has been negated** and will be negated by *pramana*.

There are different ways of categorizing causes. One way is to classify them into: (1) substantial causes and (2) cooperative conditions. Whatever is a cause necessarily falls in one of these two.

A substantial cause (Tib: *nyer len*) refers to a cause which produces or generates an effect that is a continuation of its own entity. A cooperative condition (Tib: *lhan cig byas rkyen*) refers to a cause which produces or generates an effect that is not a continuation of its own entity. It is called “cooperative condition” since it generates its effect in association with the substantial cause.<sup>73</sup>

For instance, a seed is the substantial cause of a sprout, while warmth, water, fertilizer, and soil are a sprout’s cooperative conditions. A seed is the substantial cause of a sprout because a seed and a sprout are one continuum, with the seed gradually becoming or transforming into the sprout. The seed changing into the sprout is assisted by the sprout’s cooperative conditions: warmth, water, and so forth.

Similarly, clay is the substantial cause of a clay vase, whereas a potter and his wheel are cooperative conditions. In the case of our present mind, the mind of the immediately preceding life is the substantial cause of our present mind, while its cooperative condition is, for instance, the karmic action (*i.e.*, the projecting karma) of a former life that propelled us into this life.

According to Gyalwa Gendun Drup’s *Ornament for Pramana* (Tib: *tshad ma rigs gyan*), anything that is impermanent, and thus an effect, is necessarily the result of both a substantial cause and a cooperative condition. There is no impermanent object that

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<sup>73</sup>For more explanation on substantial causes and cooperative conditions, please see Daniel E. Perdue’s *Debate in Tibetan Buddhism* [Snow Lion: New York, 1992]

has not arisen in reliance on both of these two<sup>74</sup>. In general, the substantial cause is considered to be the main cause of an object and the cooperative condition, secondary.

Anything that is an impermanent phenomenon has a substantial cause, because every impermanent phenomenon is the result of a former continuum of other impermanent phenomena. Furthermore, since every impermanent object is the result of a preceding substantial cause, which in turn is the result of another preceding substantial cause and so on, the continuum of an impermanent phenomenon does not have a beginning. This means that the prior continuum of every impermanent object has existed since beginningless time.

In the case of our present body, its substantial cause is the ovum and sperm of our parents, with those two also being the result of their respective substantial causes, the ova and sperms of our grandparents, and so forth. On the other hand, our present mind is the result of its substantial cause, the mind of the immediately preceding life, while the mind of the immediately preceding life is the result of its substantial cause, the mind of the life before the immediately preceding life, and so forth. Thus the continuums of our physical body and our mind have existed since beginningless time.

Not only is the mind of our immediately preceding life the substantial cause of our present mind: yesterday's mind, our mind last month, our mind last year, etc. are also substantial causes of our present mind. In other words, each moment of this lifetime's mind that preceded our present mind is the substantial cause of our present mind.

In the case of our body, the substantial cause of the body of the present moment is each preceding moment of the body that belongs to the same continuum of this lifetime.

Returning to the text: Gyaltsab Je explains the line from the *Pramanavarttika* ["*This is not so, because [the body being] the base has been negated.*"] to mean that the physical body is not the *special* base of the conceptual mental awareness, for it is neither its substantial cause nor its special cooperative condition.

Here, the base of a conceptual mental awareness refers to the cause of that consciousness. However, there is a difference between a base and a *special* base. Although the physical body may serve as the mere base of a conceptual mental awareness, it is not its special base.

The physical body may serve as the mere base of a conceptual mental awareness because it is the base or cause of a conceptual consciousness that is induced by a sense consciousness. An example of such a conceptual mental awareness is an awareness reflecting on the physical pain that was experienced a moment earlier by a body consciousness inducing the mental consciousness. The physical body is the base of that mental consciousness since the body is the cooperative condition of both the body sense consciousness as well as the mental consciousness induced by that sense consciousness.

Please note: even though the body does not serve as the base of all conceptual mental awarenesses, the body is the base of all sense consciousnesses (and of all conceptual mental awarenesses that are induced by sense consciousnesses).

Sense consciousnesses are results of the body; they cannot arise and exist without a body for they depend on their respective physical sense powers (which are parts of the body). An eye consciousness relies on an eye sense power, an ear consciousness on an ear sense power, and so forth.

At the time of death of a human, for instance, the bodily functions cease, the sense consciousnesses can no longer operate and they dissolve. Only the mental consciousness is left and it continues to another life.

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<sup>74</sup>Many scholars would disagree with this statement, for they hold that sound has neither an earlier nor a later continuum. This means that it has neither a substantial cause nor a substantial result. It also means that particular moments of sound – for instance, the different notes of a song played in a specific order – do not form a continuum.

According to the tantric explanation, while a person is dying, his sense consciousnesses and coarse mental consciousnesses dissolve into the subtlest type of awareness, the clear light mind<sup>75</sup>. At that point, all human thoughts, ideas, emotions, etc. gradually cease and the conceptual mental awareness that leaves the body and migrates to a future lifetime is no longer a *human* consciousness.

It is not only the body that serves as the base of particular conceptual mental awarenesses; some conceptual mental awarenesses also serve as the base (*i.e.*, the cooperative condition) of the physical body. For instance, a mental consciousness engaging in calming meditation, focusing on the inhalation and exhalation of the breath, is the base of a body that is calmer as a result of that meditation.

Although the physical body and the conceptual mental awareness can serve as each other's bases, they are not each other's *special* bases. In particular, the body is not the special base of the conceptual mental awareness because it is neither its substantial cause nor its *special* cooperative condition.

The body is not the substantial cause of the conceptual mental awareness, for the substantial cause of a conceptual mental awareness is necessarily a previous mental consciousness within the same mental continuum.

Also, the body is not the *special* cooperative condition of the conceptual mental awareness, for the mental consciousness can exist without the body. After a living being dies, the mental consciousness continues, without disintegrating like the body. The meaning of a special cooperative condition is explained in more detail below.

Dharmakirti says that the body is not the special base of the conceptual mental awareness because that has been negated by *pramana*. According to Gyalwa Gendun Drub's *Eloquent Presentation of the Pramanavarttika* (*tshad ma rnam 'grel legs bshad pa*), here *pramana* refers to reasoning, not to valid cognition.

The physical body is not the special base of the conceptual mental awareness because that has been negated through logical reasoning – through reasoning that was presented by past masters, such as Buddha Shakyamuni, Dignaga, and so forth. Gyaltsab Je adds that the body being the special base of the conceptual mental awareness will also be logically negated below, in Dharmakirti's extensive presentation on past and future lives (From the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* as cited above: "... **because** being such a **base has been negated** and will be negated by *pramana*.").

Alternatively, it does **not** follow that by reason of there being no past and future lives, familiarizing with compassion over many lifetimes is not fitting, **because** there being no [past and future lives] **has been negated** and will be negated by *pramana*.

Gyaltsab Je offers another interpretation of the line from the *Pramanavarttika* ["[This] is not [so], *because* [the body being] the base has been negated."] – although that interpretation does not include the word "*base*":

It is not correct to assert that since past and future lives do not exist, practitioners do not meditate on and thus familiarize their mental continuum with great compassion over many lifetimes. It is not correct to assert this as past and future lives do exist, for the non-existence of past and future lives has been negated by the reasoning of masters such as the Buddha, Dignaga, and so on. The non-existence of past and future lives will also be negated below.

Here [in the following section of the text], having established well that there are past and future lives, [Dharmakirti proceeds by] establishing [first] – in reliance on [the concept of] karma and its results – the mere state of high rebirths [one can attain] from the next life

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<sup>75</sup>For a more detailed explanation of that process, please see Daniel Cozort's *Highest Yoga Tantra* [Snow Lion: New York, 2005]

onwards. Based on that, he sets forth the mode of existence of the four noble truths, and [in dependence] on that, establishes the mere common definite good, together with its causes and results, practiced by beings of the three classes. [Thereafter] he establishes omniscience by establishing how one finalizes – after adorning those [four noble truths] with a limitless increase in compassion – the realization of the four noble truths.

Thus, in this chapter, [Dharmakirti] demonstrates extensively how to establish – in reliance on syllogisms through the power of the fact – mere high rebirth in the next life, and with regard to the definite good, mere liberation and omniscience.

Here, Gyaltsab Je provides a description of the sequence in which Dharmakirti sets forth the three principal goals of Buddhist practice after his presentation of the topic of past and future lives in the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. The three principal goals of Buddhist practice are (1) rebirth in one of the higher realms, (2) liberation, and (3) Buddhahood.

Gyaltsab Je explains that after Dharmakirti has completed his presentation of the logical reasons establishing the existence of reincarnation (which he presents below), he first sets forth the reasons that establish rebirth in one of the higher realms (the human, semi-celestial, or celestial realm).

Thereafter, he reveals the four noble truths. In the context of the four, he expounds on *definite goodness* (Tib: *nges legs*). Definite goodness refers to both liberation and Buddhahood. Of the two, liberation and Buddhahood, Dharmakirti first introduces the reasoning revealing the possibility of liberation from samsara, which practitioners of both the Hinayana and Mahayana aspire to attain (although, unlike Hinayana practitioners, Mahayana practitioners *mainly* aspire to attain Buddhahood). Hence, the means and methods that lead to liberation are commonly practiced by beings of the three natures (Tib: *rigs can gsum*). Beings of the three natures are: (1) beings of the Hearer nature (Tib: *nyan thos kyi rigs can*), (2) beings of the Solitary Realizer nature (Tib: *rang rgyal gyi rigs can*), and (3) beings of the Mahayana nature (Tib: *theg chen gyi rigs can*)<sup>76</sup>.

After setting forth liberation, Dharmakirti presents the reasoning establishing omniscience by revealing how practitioners gradually perfect the realization of the four noble truths after they conjoin the awareness meditating on those truths with great compassion.

As explained below, great compassion is a type of awareness that increases infinitely; when conjoined with or affected by the realization of the four noble truths, it is one of the main causes for the enlightenment of a Buddha.

The reason for setting forth the different topics in this order is that without realizing the existence of past and future lives it is not possible to realize the three principal goals of Buddhist practice (rebirth in one of the higher realms, liberation and omniscience).

Without realizing past and future lives it is not possible to realize liberation and omniscience since the comprehension of past and future lives needs to precede the realization of the law of karma. Comprehension of the law of karma, in turn, needs to precede the realization of the first two truths – in particular, of how afflictions and karma give rise to the truth of suffering. Once one has understood the sequence of those two truths one will be able to realize liberation, *i.e.*, the state of the irrevocable

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<sup>76</sup>Beings of the Hearer nature are practitioners of the Hearer vehicle who have awakened their Hearer nature (Tib: *nyan thoskyi rigs*), beings of the Solitary Realizer nature are practitioners of the Solitary Realizer vehicle who have awakened their Solitary Realizer nature (Tib: *rang sang rgyas kyi rigs*), and beings of the Mahayana nature are practitioners of the Mahayana who have awakened their Mahayana nature (Tib: *thegs chen gyi rigs*) or Buddha nature (Tib: *sang rgyas kyi rigs*). Practitioners who have awakened their Hearer or Solitary Realizer nature are practitioners who experience special feelings of joy upon hearing about the Hearer vehicle and Hearer paths or about the Solitary Realizer vehicle and Solitary Realizer paths respectively. Those feelings are so strong that they cause practitioners' hair to stand on end and tears to well up in their eyes. Practitioners have awakened their Mahayana nature or Buddha nature when they have great compassion.

elimination of the afflictions, and thereafter, having comprehended liberation, come to realize omniscience.

Dharmakirti establishes past and future lives, high rebirth, liberation, and omniscience in reliance on a particular kind of syllogism referred to as a *sylogism through the power of the fact*. A *sylogism through the power of the fact* is a syllogism that establishes *slightly* hidden phenomena. This means that the thesis of that kind of syllogism is a slightly hidden phenomenon which the syllogism's respondent comes to realize in reliance on the reason of the syllogism.

Unlike *very* hidden phenomena such as the subtle working of karma, the subtle qualities of a Buddha, etc., past and future lives and the three goals of Buddhist practice are only slightly hidden.

Since some [beings] of particular high rebirths, such as celestial beings of the desire and Brahma realm, etc. are very hidden phenomena, they are inferred in dependence on scriptures.

From the perspective of a human, some sentient beings of the three higher realms in samsara are very hidden phenomena. The sentient beings of the three higher realms in samsara are humans, semi-celestials, and celestials (while those of the three lower realms are hell-beings, pretas, and animals).

Celestial beings can be classified into: (a) celestials of the desire realm, (b) celestials of the form realm and (c) celestials of the formless realm<sup>77</sup>.

Although celestial beings of the three realms are manifest (not hidden) phenomena, to us humans they are very hidden. As examples of such very hidden celestial beings, Gyaltsab Je cites celestial beings of the desire and the Brahma realm. Celestials of the Brahma realm are beings of the first three of the seventeen types of form realms (*Brahma type*, *Brahma attendants*, and *great Brahma*).

In general, celestial beings of the three realms are manifest phenomena, since they can perceive one another with their sense consciousnesses if they are from the same realm. This means that even though celestials of the desire realm, for instance, cannot perceive those of the form or formless realm, their sense consciousnesses can perceive other celestials of the desire realm.

Yet humans are unable to perceive celestial beings with their sense consciousnesses or other ordinary direct perceivers. Nor can they perceive them with inferential cognizers that arise in reliance on *sylogisms through the power of the fact*. Therefore, from the perspective of humans, celestials are very hidden phenomena because the only way for humans to comprehend them is by relying on scriptures such as Buddhist sutras that contain explanations of celestial beings.

Although humans can arrive at a rough understanding of these beings in dependence on those scriptures, they are not able to understand them as thoroughly as they understand manifest or slightly hidden phenomena.

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<sup>77</sup>Celestial beings of the desire realm can be further classified into six types: (1) celestials of the four types of great kings, (2) celestials of the heaven of thirty-three, (3) celestials of non-combat, (4) celestials of Tushita, (5) celestials delighting in emanation, and (6) celestials controlling others' emanations.

With regard to the different regions, celestial beings of the form realm can be classified into seventeen types: (1) celestials of 'Brahma type', (2) celestials of 'Brahma attendants', (3) celestials of 'great Brahma', (4) celestials of 'little light', (5) celestials of 'limitless light', (6) celestials of 'bright light', (7) celestials of 'little virtue', (8) celestials of 'limitless virtue', (9) celestials of 'vast virtue', (10) celestials of 'cloudless', (11) celestials of 'born from merit', (12) celestials of 'great result', (13) celestials of 'not great', (14) celestials of 'without pain', (15) celestials of 'excellent appearance', (16) celestials of 'great vision', and (17) celestials of 'not low'.

With respect to the different meditative absorptions, the formless realm can be classified into four types: (1) celestials of 'infinite space', (2) celestials of 'infinite consciousness', (3) celestials of 'nothingness', and (4) celestials of the 'peak of samsara'.



The correct syllogisms that are establishing agents of those [very hidden phenomena] were taught extensively in the first chapter; the direct valid cognizers that are their support are taught in the third chapter.

Unlike slightly hidden phenomena (such as impermanence, selflessness, and so forth), very hidden phenomena cannot be realized just by relying on analysis (*i.e.*, in reliance on *syllogisms through the power of the fact*); they have to be understood in dependence on scripture. Hidden phenomena are comprehended by realizing that the scriptures that teach those phenomena are reliable. Yet the fact that a particular scripture setting forth a very hidden phenomenon is reliable is also a very hidden phenomenon. Such a very hidden phenomenon can only be realized in dependence on a correct syllogism. In other words, one needs a correct syllogism to establish that a particular scripture setting forth a very hidden phenomenon is reliable. Such a syllogism is referred to as a '*syllogism of belief*'<sup>78</sup>.

An example of a *syllogism of belief* is: *Regarding the subject, the text, "Through generosity, resources; through ethics, happy [migrations]", it is incontrovertible with respect to the object it indicates, because of being a text that is pure by way of the three analyses.*

The subject of the syllogism is: *the text, "Through generosity, resources; through ethics, happy [migrations]"*.

Here, a 'text' does not necessarily refer to an entire book or a longer piece of writing; it can refer to a few words. The text that is the subject of this syllogism are the two lines from Nagarjuna's *Ratnavali* (Tib: *rin chen phreng ba, Precious Garland*), which indicate that the karmic result of generosity is future resources, while the karmic result of ethical conduct is rebirth in one of the higher realms (the human, semi-celestial, or celestial realm).

The two lines set forth the cause and effect relationship of karmic actions. In general, the fact that giving produces resources or that ethical conduct results in rebirth in higher realms is not a very hidden phenomenon. However, the subtle features of the law of karma that are indicated in the two lines, as regards the person giving, the object given, the recipient, the time of giving and so forth, are very hidden.

The predicate of the syllogism is: *to be incontrovertible with respect to the object it (the text) indicates*. For a text *to be incontrovertible with respect to the meaning of the object it indicates* means that the text is accurate with regard to what it teaches.

Therefore, the thesis of this syllogism is: *the text, "Through generosity, resources; through ethics, happy [migrations]" is incontrovertible with respect to the object it indicates*.

This thesis is established by the reason: *because of being a text that is pure by way of the three analyses*.

A text 'being pure by way of three analyses' refers to a text being devoid of three contradictions:

- (a) The text is not contradicted by direct valid cognizers that perceive manifest phenomena.
- (b) The text is not contradicted by inferential cognizers through the power of the fact that perceive slightly hidden phenomena (*i.e.*, by valid cognizers that arise in dependence on syllogisms through the power of the fact).
- (c) There are no contradictions with regard to what the text teaches explicitly and implicitly, nor among the text's earlier and later explanations.

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<sup>78</sup>For more explanation of 'syllogisms of belief' please see Katherine Manchester Rogers' *Tibetan Logic* [Snow Lion: New York, 2009] p. 305 – 309

Through understanding, for instance, that (1) *the text, “Through generosity, resources; through ethics, happy [migrations]” is a text that is pure by way of the three analyses* and that (2) *whatever is a text that is pure by way of the three analyses is necessarily incontrovertible with respect to the object it indicates*, the respondent of this syllogism will eventually realize the thesis of the syllogism – a very hidden phenomenon (i.e., that *the text, “Through generosity, resources; through ethics, happy [migrations]” is incontrovertible with respect to the object it indicates*).

In summary, very hidden phenomena such as the subtle working of the law of karma are established in reliance on *syllogisms of belief*. Therefore, humans can come to an understanding of the different celestial beings of the desire, form, or formless realms in dependence on those correct syllogisms.

However, the explanation above gives rise to the following debate:

Gyalsab Je says that Dharmakirti sets forth rebirth in the higher realms in reliance on *syllogisms through the power of the fact*. (From the ***Elucidation of the Path to Liberation***: “... in this chapter, [Dharmakirti] demonstrates extensively how to establish – in reliance on syllogisms through the power of the fact – mere high rebirth in the next life...”). Hence, from the perspective of a human, rebirth in the higher realms – and thus the *existence* of the higher realms – are not *very* hidden but *slightly* hidden.

If (from the perspective of a human) the existence of the higher realms is slightly hidden, the existence of the *celestial* realms must also be slightly hidden, because when a human realizes rebirth in the higher realms in reliance on a *syllogism through the power of the fact* he also realizes the *existence* of the higher realms, and when he realizes the existence of the higher realms in reliance on that syllogism he realizes the existence of the *celestial* realms. He realizes the existence of the celestial realms since merely realizing the existence of the human realm does not qualify as realizing the existence of the higher realms. It does not qualify as realizing the existence of the higher realms because from the perspective of a human, the existence of the human realm is not a hidden but a manifest phenomenon (and hence does not necessitate reliance on a *syllogism through the power of the fact*).

Therefore, one may argue that if (from the perspective of a human) the celestial realms are slightly hidden, the different categories of these realms – the celestial realm associated with the desire realm and the form and formless realms – must also be slightly hidden. And if those are slightly hidden there is no reason to assert that the inhabitants of the desire, form, and formless realms are *very* hidden.

However, Gyalsab Je clearly states that they are very hidden (“Since some [beings] of particular high rebirths, such as celestial beings of the desire and Brahma realm, etc. are very hidden phenomena, they are inferred in dependence on scriptures.”).

In response to this debate some scholars say that in general, the mere categories of the celestial realms as well as their inhabitants are only slightly hidden. This is because it is possible to infer in reliance on *syllogisms through the power of the fact* that a particular rebirth in one of the six realms was caused by particular karmic actions. For instance, it is possible to realize in reliance on *syllogisms through the power of the fact* that rebirth in one of the levels of the form realm was caused by particular *virtuous* karmic actions, while rebirth in the hell realms was generated by particular *non-virtuous* actions. Dharmakirti expresses this when he says towards the end of the second chapter of the ***Pramanavarttika***:

*Since various kinds of results are seen,  
Different potencies of karmic actions  
Are inferred...*

This is similar to the fact that one can infer that a positive karmic action will result in a pleasant experience, or that a negative karma will result in an unpleasant experience.

Yet just as the subtle workings of karma (*i.e.*, the details and specific characteristics of a karmic actions and its result) are very hidden phenomena, likewise, from the perspective of a human, the details and specific characteristics of the different celestial realms and their inhabitants are very hidden.

The same is true for the preta and the hell realms as well as their inhabitants.

Returning to the latest paragraph of the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*:

Gyalsab Je says that Dharmakirti provides a detailed explanation of *sylogisms of belief* in the first chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. *Sylogisms of belief* depend on direct valid cognizers such as sense valid cognizers, which is why Gyalsab Je says that direct valid cognizers are the support of *sylogisms of belief*. Direct valid cognizers are set forth in the third chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. (From the *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation*: “The correct sylogisms that are establishing agents of those [very hidden phenomena] were taught extensively in the first chapter; the direct valid cognizers that are their support are taught in the third chapter.”)

The reason why *sylogisms of belief* depend on direct valid cognizers such as sense consciousnesses is that whoever is the respondent of a syllogism needs to realize the three modes of that syllogism. Therefore, in the case of the *sylogism of belief* cited above, the syllogism’s respondent needs to realize the syllogism’s *property of the subject* which means he has to realize that: *the text, “Through generosity, resources; through ethics, happy [migrations]” is pure by way of the three analyses.*

To be able to realize this the respondent has to rely on sense direct perceivers, because he needs his eye consciousness, for instance, in order to read the words, “*Through generosity, resources; through ethics, happy [migrations]*”.

If the [the subject-matter of the *Pramanavarttika*] were subsumed under three chapters as in the case of the *Pramanaviniscaya*<sup>79</sup>, then this [second chapter] would be subsumed under the chapter on direct perceivers, because it would be a component of yogic direct perceivers.

As mentioned above, Dharmakirti composed seven commentaries on Dignaga’s *Pramanasamucchaya*. The most extensive are the *Pramanavarttika* and a slightly shorter commentary, the *Pramanaviniscaya*.

The *Pramanavarttika* comments on Dignaga’s *Pramanasamucchaya* by way of four chapters, while the *Pramanaviniscaya* does so by way of three chapters.

If the *Pramanavarttika* were to have only three chapters (like the *Pramanaviniscaya*), the second chapter would be included in the third, for the second chapter sets forth yogic direct perceivers that are taught in the third chapter as part of the presentation of direct perceivers.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the meaning of a substantial cause?
2. What is the meaning of a cooperative condition?

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<sup>79</sup>As mentioned on page 4, Dharmakirti composed seven commentaries on Dignaga’s *Compendium of Pramana*. These commentaries are referred to as the *Seven Treatises on Pramana* (Tib: tshad ma sde bdun). They can be categorized into three treatises that are like a body and four treatises that are like branches. The three treatises that are like a body are general elaborations on the *Compendium of Pramana*, while the four that are like branches are just supplements to the first, third, and fourth chapter of the *Pramanavarttika*. Of the three treatises that are like a body, the *Pramanavarttika* is the most extensive, the *Pramanaviniscaya* is slightly shorter, and the *Nyayabindu* the shortest.

3. Give an example of a substantial cause and a cooperative condition of the conceptual mental awareness of this life.
4. Give an example of a substantial cause and a cooperative condition of the body of this life.
5. Why has the continuum of the conceptual mental awareness existed since beginningless time?
6. Why has the continuum of a vase existed since beginningless time?
7. Why does the physical body serve as the mere base of the conceptual mental awareness?
8. In what way does the conceptual mental awareness serve as the base of the physical body?
9. How does Dharmakirti present rebirth in higher realms, liberation, and omniscience, after presenting past and future lives?
10. What is the meaning of 'beings of Hinayana nature', 'beings of Solitary Realizer nature', and 'beings of Mahayana nature'?
11. What are syllogisms through the power of the fact?
12. Are celestial beings of the three realms manifest, slightly hidden or very hidden phenomena?
13. What does it mean that a text is devoid of the three contradictions?

## AN EXTENSIVE EXPLANATION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing the establishing agents of the existence of past and future lives
- (2) Refuting the establishing agents of their non-existence

## CITING THE ESTABLISHING AGENTS OF THE EXISTENCE OF PAST AND FUTURE LIVES

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing the reasons
- (2) Disposing of [the objection that the reasons are] faulty

## CITING THE REASONS

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*When one has thoroughly taken birth,  
Inhalations, exhalations, sense powers, and awarenesses  
Do [not] exist independently of similar types.*

Regarding the subject, a newly-born ordinary being's **exhalations** and **inhalations**, [his] lucid **sense powers** and specific **awarenesses** such as distractedness, etc., they **do** not – **when** [that being] **has** fully **taken birth** – **exist independently** of earlier [continuums] **of similar types**, because of possessing exhalations and inhalations, and so forth.

Dharmakirti first presents the reasons establishing the existence of *past* lives:

Since the syllogism that is indicated in the three lines of the *Pramanavarttika* presents three different subjects (a newly-born ordinary being's exhalations and inhalations, his lucid sense powers, and specific awarenesses) it can be expanded to three syllogisms:

- (a) *Regarding the subject, a newly born being's exhalations and inhalations, they do not – when that being has fully taken birth – exist independently of earlier continuums of a similar type, because they are exhalations and inhalations.*
- (b) *Regarding the subject, a newly-born ordinary being's lucid sense powers, they do not – when that being has fully taken birth – exist independently of earlier continuums of a similar type, because they are sense powers.*
- (c) *Regarding the subject, a newly-born ordinary being's specific awarenesses, such as his distractedness, they do not – when that being has fully taken birth – exist independently of earlier continuums of a similar type, because they are awarenesses.*

In reliance on their respective reasons, the three syllogisms establish that a newly-born being's respiration, sense powers, and specific awarenesses do not – when that being has fully taken birth – exist independently but as results of (and thus in dependence on) their respective earlier continuums of a similar type, *i.e.*, earlier continuums that have the potential to generate the newly-born being's respiration, sense powers, etc.

The reason for saying “when that being has *fully* taken birth” (instead of “when that being has taken birth”) is to indicate the time when a being has clearly been born or conceived<sup>80</sup>, that is, when the being's awareness has completed the process of entering and creating a link to the physical aggregates of a new life. For instance, in the case of a fertilized ovum, it is not immediately obvious whether a consciousness has entered the ovum and whether the fertilized ovum has become the body of a sentient being<sup>81</sup>.

A person's present exhalations and inhalations refer to his respiration, *i.e.*, his breathing in and out. Like his sense powers and different types of awarenesses, a person's breathing in and out is generated in dependence on its past continuum – a continuum that has the capacity to produce the present respiration.

“Lucid sense powers” refer to a living being's five sense powers: the eye sense power, the ear sense power, the nose sense power, the tongue sense power, and the body sense power. As mentioned above, these are subtle physical forms associated with their respective sense organs. Together with the observed object conditions and the immediately preceding conditions, they generate the different sense consciousnesses and empower those consciousnesses to perceive their objects.

Please note that whatever is a phenomenon's “earlier continuum of a similar type” (Tib: *rigs 'dra'i rgyun snga ma* or *rigs 'dra snga ma*) is necessarily the substantial cause of the phenomenon. This means that it has the following characteristics: (1) it is a continuum that precedes and transforms into that phenomenon and (2) it has the potential to generate the phenomenon. For instance, a seed is the substantial cause of a sprout. Thus, since the seed becomes or transforms into the sprout, the seed and its resultant sprout

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<sup>80</sup>Please note that in Tibetan, the term “to take birth” (Tib: *skye ba len pa*) can refer to both conception and – in the case of a mammal – birth from a mother's womb. However, in the context of the presentation of past and future lives it usually refers to conception. In order to differentiate between conception and actual birth, the term is sometimes used in the following two ways: (1) to take birth *in* a mother's womb (Tib: *ama'i mngal na skye ba len*) and (2) to take birth *from* a mother's womb (Tib: *ama'i mngal nas skye ba len*).

<sup>81</sup>Of course, it may be difficult to observe, for example, a fertilized human ovum. Yet even in the case of the eggs of “external fertilizers” such as female frogs who release their eggs in the water to be fertilised by their male counterparts, it is not immediately obvious whether a consciousness has entered the fertilized egg and whether it now contains the body of a sentient being. This becomes more evident only when the ovum starts to grow.

are one continuum (with the seed constituting the earlier and the sprout the later continuum<sup>82</sup>).

Further, the seed has the potential to generate or produce the sprout, which is why the seed is described as the sprout's "earlier continuum of a similar type".

Similarly, since the sprout is the substantial result of the seed, the sprout is the seed's "subsequent continuum of a similar type".

Therefore, a newly-born being's mental consciousness depends on its earlier continuum of a similar type, the mental consciousness of the being's immediately preceding life, because that past life's mental consciousness is the substantial cause of the present mental consciousness.

Likewise, a newly-born being's mental consciousness is the *subsequent continuum of a similar type* of the past life's mental consciousness, since it is the substantial result of the past mental consciousness.

It is through the ascertainment of positive and negative concomitance that it is established that the distractedness, etc. of awareness is generated by familiarity with its cause. Were that not to be the case, there would be a logical absurdity: it would follow that there are no causes and results, because there would be no *pramana* that ascertains them.

Positive and negative concomitance here denotes positive and negative concomitance with regard to a cause and its result. As mentioned before, such concomitance describes the relationship between a cause and its result. Positive concomitance refers to the fact that when there is a cause, its result can be generated, and when there is a result, its cause must have preceded that result. Negative concomitance refers to the fact that when there is no cause, its result cannot be generated.

Taking the example of specific awarenesses such as distractedness, anger, love, open-mindedness, and so on, they are the result of having habituated one's mental continuum with their causes, because they are connected by way of positive and negative concomitance with accustoming oneself to those causes. They are connected in this way since those mental states manifest owing to past familiarity with their causes; had one not accustomed oneself with their causes, they could not arise. Thus, it is through habituation with distractedness, anger, etc. in the past that they now arise in our mental continuum. They manifested in our continuum even when we were small children, for we had familiarized ourselves with them in past lives.

However, if one were to assert that distractedness, anger, etc. are not generated by familiarity with their causes, the following absurdity would occur: it would follow that these awarenesses come into existence without depending on a cause. If distractedness, anger, and so forth were to arise without depending on a cause, whatever is an impermanent phenomenon could come into existence without being generated by a cause. If that were possible, it would follow that there are *no* phenomena that relate to

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<sup>82</sup>Not only do the seed and the sprout form a continuum, the seed and the sprout are both continuums. The seed is a continuum because it is made up of earlier and later moments of a seed, while the sprout is a continuum because it is made up of earlier and later moments of a sprout. It is important to understand that there is *no* seed or sprout that is not a continuum; whatever is a seed is necessarily a continuum and whatever is a sprout is necessarily a continuum. This is because there are no smallest moments in time. Hence, any impermanent phenomenon consists of earlier and later moments which can again be subdivided into earlier and later moments. In fact, any moment of a phenomenon can be endlessly subdivided into earlier and later moments, for if that were not the case it would absurdly follow that there is a smallest moment in time that does not consist of submoments.

one another as cause and result. This is because there would be no valid cognizer realizing such<sup>83</sup>.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*They are not generated by the body alone,*

Also, regarding that subject, **they are not generated by the elemental body alone**, because they are generated by an earlier [continuum of] an awareness, etc. that is of a similar type.

Having established above that the subject, a newly-born ordinary being's exhalations and inhalations, his sense powers, and his awarenesses such as distractedness, etc. are generated by earlier continuums of a similar type (thus establishing the existence of past lives), Dharmakirti concludes: regarding a newly-born ordinary being's exhalations and inhalations, etc., they are not generated by the physical body alone – as some non-Buddhist philosophers hold – because they are the substantial results of their earlier continuums.

However, according to some scholars, the exhalations and inhalations mentioned here do not refer to actually breathing in and out but to the *potential* to do so. It is difficult to assert that a living being's respiration goes from one life to the next, because in the case of, for instance, a human who dies and is reborn again as a human, he stops breathing when he dies and respiration only resumes after he leaves the womb of his future mother. So the substantial cause of a newly-born being's *potential* to breathe is the potential to breathe from his previous life.

Other scholars suggest that the exhalations and inhalations mentioned here refer to the seed of a particular type of *effort* – the effort that induces a person's breathing. As explained below, respiration is caused by a type of effort that is present throughout the greatest part of a person's life, without which the person would not breathe. Since that type of effort is a mental factor and thus a consciousness, it continues from lifetime to lifetime. According to this explanation, the substantial cause of a living being's present effort inducing respiration is the past life's effort inducing respiration; it is the continuation of that effort that animates the body's breathing in a future life.

However, in the case of a newly conceived embryo, it does not have the mental factor of effort inducing exhalation and inhalation in its mental continuum. As there is no respiration at that time, there is no reason for an awareness inducing respiration to be present. Yet, the *seed* for such effort (*i.e.*, the potential for such effort to arise) is present in that person's fetal continuum, which is why some scholars hold that 'a *newly-born* ordinary being's exhalations and inhalations' are serving here as a reference to that seed.

Both these interpretations are from the perspective of the sutric system of Buddhism.

Some scholars provide another explanation, from the point of view of Buddhist tantra. A person's breathing in and out refers to the coarser or more obvious movement of the coarser types of "winds", or vital energies. Although that kind of movement does not

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<sup>83</sup>The reason, "this is because there would be no valid cognizer realizing such", indicates the relationship between a phenomenon and a valid cognizer realizing the phenomenon. As explained before, 'that which is realized by a valid cognizer' and 'that which exists' are synonymous. Hence, if something is realized by a valid cognizer, it necessarily exists and if it is not realized by a valid cognizer it does not exist.

This is why, if distractedness, anger, etc. were not the results of familiarity with their causes, there would be no valid cognizer realizing that these awarenesses are the results of familiarity with their causes. If there were no such valid cognizers, it would follow that there are no valid cognizers realizing that a result depends on a cause. Therefore, there would be no causes and results, because there would be no valid cognizers realizing such.

itself proceed to the next life, a subtler level of movement associated with a subtler wind does continue to a future life.

According to tantric physiology, the winds are not just moving air, they are vital energies that cause all movement by and within the body, such as breathing, the circulation of blood and other liquids, muscular movement, defecation, urination, and so on.

The energy winds are also instrumental in the functioning of the six types of consciousness (the five sense consciousnesses and the mental consciousness). The different minds would be inoperative without the winds to provide a medium for their movement. This is why the energy winds are described as mounts on which the awarenesses “ride”, by analogy with a rider on a horse.

The energy winds can be divided into the coarse and the subtle. The coarse winds operate in the ordinary waking state. The subtle winds operate at times of sleep, fainting, sneezing, orgasm, and dying; they also serve as the mount of subtler types of consciousness such as the clear light mind.

Like the energy winds, consciousness can be divided into coarse and subtle levels of consciousness. The five sense consciousnesses are examples of coarse awarenesses. They ride on the coarse energy winds.

The subtlest type of awareness is the clear light mind and its mount is the subtlest type of energy wind. They (the clear light mind and its energy wind) are of one nature. The clear light mind has the aspect of cognizing its object, while its wind has the aspect of moving the clear light mind.

The clear light mind does not manifest during the ordinary waking state. In the case of an ordinary person, it manifests only at the time of death (although a similitude of it arises at times of sleep, fainting, sneezing, and orgasm).

As part of the death process, a person’s sense consciousnesses and coarse mental consciousness gradually dissolve into the clear light mind, while the coarser winds dissolve into the subtlest wind, the one that serves as the mount of the clear light mind. Thereafter, the clear light mind and its wind leave the physical body and move to the next life.

At the time of death, the coarse respiration dissolves into the subtle “respiration” because the coarse wind associated with the respiration dissolves into the subtlest wind. In that way the function of movement (the exhalation and inhalation) of that coarse wind also dissolves into the function of movement of the subtlest wind. Therefore, when a person dies, subtle “respiration” goes on to his future rebirth since the subtlest wind proceeds to his next life<sup>84</sup>.

Also, some scholars explain that it is not the five sense powers that are a continuation from a past life. Instead, it is their *potential*, i.e., the *potential* to empower sense perception, that continues from one life to the next. Hence, the substantial cause of the present *potential* of the sense powers is the sense powers’ *potential* from the immediately preceding life.

However, since it is not only the *potential* of a consciousness that is reincarnated, but consciousness itself, it is the awareness of the immediately preceding life that acts as the substantial cause of the present awareness. The physical body of this life merely serves as a cooperative condition of this life’s consciousness.

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<sup>84</sup>Please note that since the *Pramanavarttika* was composed from the point of view of the sutric and not the tantric system of Buddhism, this explanation as regards the subtle energy winds, etc. does not strictly reflect the intention of the author, Dharmakirti. As it nonetheless applies, it is added by some teachers when orally explaining the text, in order to broaden students’ understanding.



[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since [otherwise] there would be a logical absurdity ...*

If that were not the case, **there would be a logical absurdity** – it would follow that all the elements [could become] living creatures, because mental awarenesses arise from the elements alone.

If the conceptual mental awareness were not the result of the conceptual mental awareness of a previous life but – in the case of a human – the result of the ovum and sperm of the parents, the elements of the ovum and sperm would transform into, or become a person's five aggregates<sup>85</sup>. They would become those aggregates since they would change into a person's mind and body. If they were to become a person's five aggregates, the elements would become a living being and the following absurdity would occur: It would follow that *all* the elements could potentially become a living being, for the elements of the ovum and sperm would become a living being.

Dharmakirti provides a more detailed explanation of this logical absurdity below.

The following three and half lines set forth the reasoning that establishes the existence of future lives:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*...It has been seen*

*That [the earlier continuum] had the ability to connect.*

*There is not any [other cause that is required].*

*[It is not feasible to assert that] by some [reason] there is no connecting later.*

It is also not feasible [to assert] that **later**, at the point of an ordinary being's death, his sense powers, etc., **do not connect** with their subsequent [continuum of a] similar type **by** reason of the lack of some part of their causes, because at that time the causes of the subsequent continuums of a similar types are complete. Further, previously **it has been seen that** the earlier continuum of a similar type **had the ability to connect** with the later continuum and it is not feasible that there was **any** other additional cause.

Having set forth the reasons for the existence of past lives, here Dharmakirti basically argues that since there are past lives, there must be future lives:

The last moment of the mental consciousness of the *immediately preceding* life is the substantial cause of the first moment of the mental consciousness of *this* life. Likewise, the *first* moment of the mental consciousness of this life is the substantial cause of the *second* moment of the mental consciousness of this life; the second moment is the substantial cause of the third moment, the third moment the substantial cause of the fourth moment, and so forth. In this way, the consciousness of the present life continues until the moment of death, with the last moment of the mental consciousness of the present life serving as the substantial cause of the first moment of the mental consciousness of the next life.

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<sup>85</sup>All sentient beings (except those in the formless realm) are composed of five aggregates. Since beings in the formless realm do not have a physical body, they only have four aggregates. The five aggregates are: (1) form, (2) feeling, (3) discernment, (4) compositional factors, (5) consciousness. Form refers to the physical body of sentient beings. It includes bones, blood, flesh, and so forth. Feeling is a mental factor which experiences pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral feelings. Discernment refers to a mental factor whose main function is to discern and comprehend its objects. The fourth aggregate, compositional factors, includes all the other mental factors such as mental engagement, volition, anger, compassion, etc. The seeds and imprints of awarenesses are also compositional factors. Consciousness (or main mind) includes the five sense consciousnesses and the mental consciousness, which are not mental factors but main minds. The principal function of main minds is to apprehend their objects.

This means that at the time of an ordinary person's death, the last moment of his mental consciousness *connects* with the first moment of the mental consciousness of his next life. It connects with that first moment because it is its substantial cause and thus becomes or changes into the first moment of the mental consciousness that is now linked to a new physical body.

Therefore, the last moment of the mental consciousness of this life connects with its *later continuum of a similar type* because it connects with its substantial result, the first moment of the mental consciousness of the next life.

Yet, as mentioned above, not only does the mental consciousness continue from one life to the next, (the potential of) the sense consciousnesses and the respiration also continue to future lives.

This means that at the time of a person's conception, the last moment of (the potential of) his sense powers associated with the immediately preceding life has connected with the first moment (of the potential) of his sense powers associated with the present life. Likewise, at the time of the person's death, the last moment (of the potential) of his present sense powers connects with the subsequent continuum of a similar type, the first moment (of the potential) of the sense powers associated with the next life. The last moment (of the potential) of the sense powers connects with the subsequent continuum of a similar type because that last moment is the substantial cause of the future (potential of) the sense powers and thus becomes or transforms into the subsequent continuum that is linked to a new body.

However, someone may wrongly assume that (the potential of) the sense powers at the time of an ordinary person's death does not connect with the future (potential of the) sense powers because any one of the cooperative conditions is missing.

As a substantial cause, (the potential of) the sense powers are able to transform into the future (potential of the) sense powers, yet they can only do so with the assistance of particular cooperative conditions. This is the case with any substantial cause and its result. Although a seed, for instance, is able to change into its substantial result, the sprout, it cannot do so without the cooperation of conditions such as light, water, fertilizer, and so forth.

Aryadeva says in his **Four Hundred Stanzas** (Skt: *Catuhśatakashastra*, Tib: *bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa*):

*When the causes are incomplete  
Birth will not occur either.*

In response to someone holding that any of the cooperative conditions is missing, our own system says that such an assertion is not reasonable since at the time of an ordinary person's death, the causes – substantial causes as well as cooperative conditions – of (the potential of) the sense powers associated with the next life are complete. They are complete, as students of the *Pramanavarttika* previously saw in reliance on the earlier presentation of the reasons for the existence of past lives. Those causes were complete when, at the time of death, (the potential of) the sense powers of a person's previous life connected with their continuum in the present life. Therefore, if those causes were complete at that time, there is no reason to assume that they are incomplete when the person moves on to the next life.

Also, it does not make sense that an *additional* cause, *i.e.*, an additional cooperative condition is required. Such an additional cause was not required when (the potential of) the sense powers associated with the past life connected with (the potential) of the sense powers of this life and there is no reason why it should be required for (the

potential of) the sense powers of this life to be able to connect with their continuum of the next life<sup>86</sup>.

In summary, regarding the subject, the knower of a newly-born ordinary being, it was preceded by an earlier knower, because it is a knower. Regarding the subject, the conceptual mental awareness of that [ordinary being] at the point of death, it connects with a later knower, because it is a knower that possesses attachment.

To summarize the explanation provided above, Gyaltsab cites two syllogisms. The first one establishes the existence of past lives and the second, the existence of future lives.

The word “knower” is synonymous with consciousness and awareness. In general, the terms, “knower”, “awareness”, “consciousness”, and “mind” are used interchangeably<sup>87</sup>.

According to some scholars (for instance, Panchen Sonam Drakpa<sup>88</sup>), the first syllogism is:

*Regarding the subject, the knower of a newly-born ordinary being, it was preceded by a knower that is its cause, because it is a knower.*

The second syllogism is:

*Regarding the subject, the conceptual mental awareness of an ordinary being at the point of death, it connects with a knower that is its result, because it possesses attachment.*

These two are considered to be the main syllogisms establishing the fact of reincarnation. However, they give rise to the following debates:

Since the first syllogism establishes the existence of past lives, not only will the respondent, realize the syllogism’s thesis (*a newly-born being’s knower was preceded by a knower that is its cause*) in reliance on the syllogism’s reason, he will also realize that the knower of that newly-born being was preceded by a consciousness of a past life.

However, a consciousness that is the *cause* of the knower of the newly-born being is not necessarily the *substantial* cause of that knower, for it could also be its cooperative condition. Only a consciousness that is the *substantial* cause of the first moment of the knower of this life is necessarily the earlier continuum of that first moment and thus one of the aggregates associated with a previous life. Therefore, it is easier to realize that *the knower of a newly-born being was preceded by a consciousness of a past life* once one has

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<sup>86</sup>Some scholars explain that the latter kind of reasoning can also be applied to the following situation: Owing to someone’s vivid and detailed memories of a past life, you develop the firm conviction that the person has lived before. Nevertheless, you come to the conclusion that while this is true for the other person, you yourself did not have a past life.

Logically, this is not feasible, for there is no reason why another person’s mental consciousness would have existed before they were conceived into this life, while your own mental consciousness was just the substantial result of the ovum and sperm of your parents.

<sup>87</sup>According to some scholars, consciousness is a knower because it perceives or is aware of its object. Other scholars maintain that it is a knower because it has the *potential* to know or realize its object. Therefore, even a wrong consciousness is a knower - such as an eye consciousness perceiving the horns of a rabbit. In keeping with the first view, it is a knower since it perceives the horns of a rabbit. According to the second view, although such an awareness is mistaken with regard to its main object (the horns of a rabbit) and does not realize its object (since the horns of a rabbit are non-existent and cannot be realized), it has the *potential* to realize its object. It has that *potential* because if its object existed, it would be able to realize the object.

<sup>88</sup>Panchen Sonam Drakpa (1478-1554) cites the two syllogisms in his commentary on the *Pramanavarttika* called *Elucidating the Intent of the Pramanavarttika* (Tib: *rnam ‘grel dgongs pa rab gsal*).

Panchen Sonam Drakpa was the fifteenth Ganden Tripa (holder of the Ganden Monastery throne and thus head of the Gelugpa tradition). A student of the second Dalai Lama, he later became the tutor of the third Dalai Lama. He served as the abbot of each one of the main Gelugpa monastic universities – Ganden, Drepung, and Sera. Panchen Sonam Drakpa’s collected works comprise fourteen volumes, including the main textbooks still in use in Drepung’s Loseling College, Ganden’s Shartse College, the Institute of Buddhist Dialectics, and many other monastic institutions inside and outside Tibet. Monks and nuns in these institutions mainly rely upon the works of this great teacher to prepare for their Geshe degree.

realized that *the knower was preceded by a consciousness that is its substantial cause*, which is why some scholars<sup>89</sup> suggest that the word “substantial” should be added to the syllogism’s predicate and the first syllogism should be:

*Regarding the subject, the knower of a newly-born ordinary being, it was preceded by a knower that is its **substantial** cause, because it is a knower. For instance, like the second moment of the present awareness.*

The same debate also arises regarding the second syllogism, which is why the same scholars suggest that the word “substantial” should be added to the second syllogism’s predicate:

*Regarding the subject, the conceptual mental awareness of an ordinary being at the point of death, it connects with a knower that is its **substantial** result, because it possesses attachment. For instance, like the first moment of the present awareness.*

Others disagree, arguing that it is not necessary to add the word “substantial” to the predicate (*it connects with a knower that is its result*) because of the word “connect”. The word “connect” indicates that a knower that is the result of the mental consciousness of an ordinary being at the time of his death is necessarily the subsequent result of that being’s consciousness and is thus its subsequent continuum.

Hence, not only will the syllogism’s respondent in reliance on the reason come to realize the thesis – i.e., *that the conceptual mental awareness of an ordinary being at the point of death connects with a knower that is its result* – he will also realize that the conceptual mental awareness at the point of death will transfer into a subsequent awareness associated with a future life.

Another debate concerns the meaning of the term ‘a knower of a *newly-born* being’. In the case of humans, does the term refer to a knower shortly after conception or a knower shortly after birth from a mother’s womb? If it were to refer to a knower shortly after birth from a mother’s womb, it would not make sense that the first syllogism establishes the existence of past lives. This is because an awareness that precedes the knower in the continuum of a person who has been newly-born from his mother’s womb is not necessarily a consciousness of a past life; it could also be the consciousness of a fetus in its mother’s womb.

Yet if ‘a knower of a newly-born being’ were to refer to a knower shortly after conception, ‘*a newly-born ordinary being’s exhalations and inhalations*’ and ‘*a newly-born ordinary being’s lucid sense powers*’ – which are the subjects of two of the syllogisms cited above<sup>90</sup> – would not make any sense. They would not make sense because a living being who has been newly conceived does not yet have respiration or sense powers.

However, the subjects of the two syllogisms would make sense if a newly-born ordinary being’s lucid sense powers and his respiration were to refer to the *potential* of the sense powers and respiration – as some scholars suggest – since such a potential is present in the continuum of a being who has been newly conceived.

A further debate concerns the subject of the second syllogism: what is the meaning of the term ‘*the point of death*’? Does the term only refer to the moment of death when the subtle death-mind manifests or does it also refer to the period that precedes that mind, when a dying sentient being is moving through the different stages of death?

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<sup>89</sup>This is suggested for instance, by the Tibetan scholar Danag Gendun Lobsang who composed a comprehensive commentary on the *Pramanavarttika* called *Danag’s [Commentary on the] Pramanavarttika (rta nag rnam ‘gre)*.

<sup>90</sup>The two syllogisms cited above are: (1) *Regarding the subject, a newly-born ordinary being’s exhalations and inhalations, they are not only a result of the elemental body, because they are generated by an earlier continuum of respiration that is of a similar type.* (2) *Regarding the subject, a newly-born ordinary being’s lucid sense powers, they are not only a result of the elemental body, because they are generated by earlier continuums of the sense powers.*

The point of death here is explained to refer to the time when the *subtle death-mind* manifests. The *subtle death-mind* (Tib: *'chi sems phra mo*) is the last moment of consciousness before consciousness leaves the body when a being has died. It is neither virtuous nor non-virtuous but a neutral non-afflictive awareness<sup>91</sup>.

Furthermore, regarding the reason of the second syllogism, what is the meaning of an awareness 'possessing attachment'? Does a knower that possesses attachment refer to attachment itself? Or is any consciousness in the continuum of someone who has not yet eliminated attachment - and become an Arhat - necessarily a knower possessing attachment?

It is not correct to assert that a knower possessing attachment refers to attachment itself. Although the conceptual mental awareness of an ordinary being at the point of death, *i.e.*, a subtle death-mind is a knower that possesses attachment, such a mental awareness is not attachment. It is not attachment because, as mentioned above, it is a neutral non-afflictive awareness. The subtle death-mind of an ordinary being possesses attachment since an ordinary being has not yet eliminated any afflictions.

Also regarding the reason of the second syllogism, one may wonder why it is being cited instead of simply saying, "*because it is a knower*". (*Regarding the subject, the conceptual mental awareness of an ordinary being at the point of death, it connects with a knower that is its substantial result, because it is a knower*)?

It is cited because the second chapter of the *Pramanavarttika* is set forth from the Sautrantika point of view, which asserts 'vehicles' (Tib: *mthar thug theg pa gsum*)<sup>92</sup>. According to this philosophical tenet system, if the reason were "*because it is a knower*", the syllogism would be logically flawed since it would not have a pervasion. It would not have a pervasion because from the point of view of the Sautrantika, *whatever is a knower does not necessarily connect with a knower that is its substantial result*.

*Whatever is a knower does not necessarily connect with a knower that is its substantial result* since, for example, the last moment of awareness in the mental continuum of an

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<sup>91</sup>Of the four Buddhist tenet systems, only the proponents of the Vaibashika assert that the subtle death-mind can be virtuous, non-virtuous or neutral. According to the remaining systems (the Sautrantika, Chittamatra and Madhyamika), the awarenesses that precede the subtle death-mind are coarser and clearer – thus easier to recognize for the being in whose continuum they arise – and they may be virtuous, non-virtuous or neutral. However, the subtle death-mind is necessarily a non-afflictive neutral consciousness, for its degree of subtlety does not permit it to arise as a virtuous, non-virtuous or afflicted neutral awareness.

<sup>92</sup>All Buddhist tenet-holders accept three vehicles: (1) the Hearer Vehicle, (2) the Solitary Realizer Vehicle, and (3) the Mahayana Vehicle. These vehicles pertain to the different modes of practice of three different types of individuals (Hearers, Solitary Realizers, and Bodhisattvas). However, like the proponents of the Vaibhashika and the Chittamatra School Following Scripture, the proponents of the Sautrantika assert that the three vehicles are all *final* vehicles, because they hold that practitioners who have reached the states of Hearer Arhats or Solitary Realizer Arhats do not continue to practice in order to become Buddhas. Immediately after death, the mental and physical continuums of these Arhats are severed and they cease to exist. Practitioners who enter the Mahayana Vehicle will eventually attain the fully enlightened state of a Buddha and teach others the methods for liberation and Buddhahood. Yet when these Buddhas pass away, their mental and physical continuums are also severed and they go out of existence.

For the higher tenet schools (other than the Chittamatra School Following Scripture), there are two *temporary* vehicles but only one *final* vehicle. This means that all sentient beings will eventually attain Buddhahood even if they first become Hearer or Solitary Realizer Arhats. After their death, it is asserted that Arhats form a new physical body through the power of pure prayers and meditation, and they enter the Mahayana path. Once enlightened, even if their bodies are left behind, their mental continuum will go on, and by emanating new bodies they will continue to work to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment.

Arhat with remainder<sup>93</sup> is a knower, but does not connect with a knower that is its substantial result. The last moment of that awareness does not connect with a knower that is its substantial result because a moment later its continuum will be severed.

In general, past and future lives are the foundation of Buddhist philosophy and practice, and the main purpose for realizing their existence – and thus for citing the two syllogisms – is for practitioners to engage in the essential practices pertaining to the Hinayana and Mahayana.

More specifically, as mentioned above, the main purpose for realizing the existence of *past* lives is to cultivate great compassion in accordance with the *seven-fold cause and effect method*:

Once practitioners have realized the existence of past lives in reliance on the first syllogism's reason, they come to know that consciousness and thus samsara have existed since beginningless time<sup>94</sup>.

In dependence on this realization, they generate the awareness understanding that all sentient beings have been their mother, the awareness that is mindful of their mothers' kindness, the wish to repay that kindness, affectionate love, and great compassion. Thereafter, they gradually generate the special attitude and Bodhicitta in order to enter the Mahayana path and eventually attain the fully enlightened state of a Buddha.

The main purpose for realizing the existence of *future* lives is to engage in the practices associated with the stages of the paths of the three types of person:

Realization of the existence of future lives (together with an understanding of the different realms and numerous types of suffering of samsara) initially leads to fear of the worst types of samsaric suffering – the suffering that is experienced in the lower realms. In order to prevent future rebirth in those realms, practitioners engage in the practices common to persons of small capacity by refraining from the ten non-virtues and by upholding ethical conduct.

Thereafter, practitioners develop fear of samsaric suffering in general and thus engage in the practices common to persons of middling capacity by striving to overcome the root of samsara, the awareness grasping at a self.

Eventually – their minds having become accustomed to the practices of great love and compassion – practitioners develop dismay about others' misery. They become

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<sup>93</sup>There are two types of Arhats: (1) Arhats with remainder and (2) Arhats without remainder. Arhats (also called "foe-destroyers") have irrevocably eliminated all afflictions and achieved liberation. Arhats with remainder are Arhats who, despite having a mind completely free from the afflictions, still have the same physical body of flesh and blood with which they were born: a body that is the result of karma and afflictions. This is because they were not born as Arhats, they attained Nirvana in the present lifetime. They were born under the control of karma and afflictions and their continuum of physical aggregates is the result of these two. Consequently, they still experience physical sickness, aging, and death (although any associated suffering is experienced only by their sense consciousnesses, for their mental consciousness is totally free from suffering). When the lifespan which is the outcome of the *projecting karma* that propelled them into the present life is exhausted and they die, their liberated mental consciousness separates from the samsaric body. At that time, they become *Arhats without remainder*, free from 'the remainder': the body that is the result of karma and afflictions. According to the Buddhist tenet-holders who assert *three final vehicles*, the moment an Arhat with remainder dies and his liberated mental consciousness separates from the body, the continuum of his consciousness is severed and the Arhat ceases to exist.

<sup>94</sup>In reliance on the first syllogism, practitioners come to realize that whatever is an awareness is necessarily preceded by an awareness of a similar type. In that way they comprehend that consciousness has existed since beginningless time, for they realize that there is no first consciousness (*i.e.*, a consciousness that was not preceded by another consciousness). In dependence on such an understanding, they also come to know that samsara has no beginning. Samsara essentially refers to the aggregates of a living being which are the result of karma and afflictions. Thus, practitioners realize that the conceptual mental awareness of an ordinary being *is* samsara because it is an aggregate that is the result of karma and afflictions. Thereafter they come to know that since such a mental consciousness is preceded by another mental consciousness which is the result of karma and afflictions, which is itself also preceded by a mental consciousness that is the result of karma and afflictions, and so on, samsara does not have a beginning.

concerned about other sentient beings having to take rebirth in the lower realms, experiencing the different types of suffering associated with the higher realms, and so forth. Motivated by the wish to liberate all sentient beings, they engage in the practices of a person of great capacity by cultivating Bodhicitta and working to attain the enlightened state of a Buddha<sup>95</sup>

Please note that the existence of past and future lives is based on the fact that in general, the continuum of an impermanent phenomenon is both beginningless and – in most cases – endless.

In the case of physical phenomena: a physical phenomenon is always the result of its substantial cause, a physical phenomenon, and the cause of its substantial result, another physical phenomenon (even though the appearance of those physical phenomena may change drastically moment by moment and thus look quite different from one another). Hence the continuum of any physical phenomenon is both beginningless and endless<sup>96</sup>.

With regard to non-physical phenomena such as consciousness, an awareness is always preceded by an earlier moment of awareness: it has therefore existed since beginningless time. However, according to the followers of the Sautrantika school, as mentioned above, although the awareness in the continuum of an ordinary person is always followed by a later moment of awareness, the consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat or a Buddha eventually goes out of existence.

Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika* below:

*It will be established since there is no substantial cause  
Of a consciousness that is not a consciousness.*

Aryadeva says in his *Four Hundred Stanzas*:

*Just as the end of a seed is seen<sup>97</sup>  
Though it has no beginning,*

And:

*The future is endless and  
You were always a mundane being.*

In his commentary on Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas* (the *Essence of Good Explanations, Explanation of the 'Four Hundred Stanzas on the Yogic Deeds of Bodhisattvas'*, Tib: *bzhi brgya pa'i rnam bshad legs bshad snying po*) Gyaltsab Je says:

*Future rebirths are endless and the past is beginningless.*

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<sup>95</sup>Lama Tsongkhapa says in his *Lam Rim Chenmo*:

*With regard to this, the great spiritual teacher Puchungwa engaged in mental training based on the twelve links of dependent arising and made the stages of the path a reflection on the progression through and cessation of those [links]. That is, he explained that reflection on progressing through and abandoning the twelve links of the miserable realms is the topic for the persons of small capacity and then reflection on progressing through and abandoning the twelve links of the two happy realms is the topic for persons of middling capacity. The topic for persons of great capacity is to assess their own situation according to these two practices [of persons of small and middling capacity]. They then develop love and compassion for sentient beings who have been their mothers and have wandered through cyclic existence by way of the twelve links, train themselves in the wish to become a Buddha for the welfare of these beings, and practice the paths to this end.*

<sup>96</sup>As mentioned before, some scholars hold that an exception to this is sound.

<sup>97</sup>It is important to note that the line, "Just as the end of a seed is seen" does not mean that the continuum of a seed has an end. It means that the seed goes out of existence *as a seed* when it is, for instance, burnt by fire.

Please note that the last two quotes are from the point of view of Buddhist philosophers who accept *one final vehicle*<sup>98</sup>.

Moreover, consciousness always perceives an object. Yet awareness of an object is not possible unless consciousness is preceded by an earlier continuum of a similar type. It is owing to such an earlier continuum that, for instance, consciousness has an object at the time of conception.

Throughout our life our mental consciousness mostly perceives sense objects. It thinks about, analyzes, and categorizes sights, sounds, smells, and so forth. Such perception is induced by the sense consciousnesses, which are strongly linked to the body. However, in the case of a human rebirth, when the mental consciousness links with a fertilized ovum at the time of conception, there are no sense consciousnesses and thus no perception of the sense objects associated with the fertilized ovum, the current life's body. Yet, since every mind always has an object, the mental consciousness at the time of conception necessarily apprehends an object. The appearance and perception of such an object is only possible because the mental awareness at the time of conception is preceded by earlier consciousnesses perceiving their respective objects.

Furthermore, the fact that every consciousness is preceded by an earlier continuum accounts for (1) awarenesses that are the result of previous familiarity and (2) awarenesses that are the result of previous experience.

Regarding awarenesses that are the result of previous familiarity, sentient beings have been taking birth in samsara since beginningless time, resulting in such a familiarity with the way to perform certain actions that they do not need to be taught. For instance, a newly-born human infant naturally seeks its mother's breast. From a Buddhist point of view, this instinctive behaviour is the result of past familiarity with the type of rebirth that requires a sentient being to survive on his mother's milk. Past familiarity enables the infant to recognize its mother's breast as a source of food. Yet seeking its mother's breast is not merely an automatic reflex. Instead it is a volitional action that is controlled by a conceptual awareness; a conceptual consciousness perceiving the breast as a source of food and arising even prior to the infant knowing language. Such a mind is an example of an awareness that is the result of familiarity.

An example of a mind that is the result of experience is a mental consciousness in the continuum of a toddler remembering events from a past life. Such a memory is only possible owing to a preceding continuum of awareness having experienced those past events.

The following is a more extensive presentation of the logical absurdity cited on page 180:

[Someone:] Not all the elements will become living creatures, because some that do not have the ability to generate sense powers and awarenesses, such as stones, etc. will not become living creatures.

An opponent (who holds that the awareness in the continuum of a newly-born being is not the continuation of a former moment of awareness) objects to the logical absurdity presented by our own system. He contends that it does not follow that all the elements will become living beings because, for instance, stones do not serve as the substantial cause of consciousness or (the potential of) the sense powers.

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<sup>98</sup> According to Buddhist tenet holders who assert *one final vehicle* (i.e., the followers of the Chittamatra following Reasoning, the Madhyamika Svatantrika and the Madhyamika Prasangika), mental consciousness is both beginningless and endless, for even when a person attains liberation or Buddhahood, his consciousness does not cease but continues in a liberated or fully awakened form.



[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*There would by no means be parts of earth, etc. anywhere  
That would not be generated as living beings  
Born from warmth and moisture, and so forth.  
Therefore, all [the elements would have] the entity of being seeds.*

[Response:] It **would** follow that **all** the elements **have the entity of being** the **seeds** of living creatures, because **there would by no means be parts of earth** and other elements **anywhere that would not be generated as living beings born from warmth and moisture, and so forth**. If something were to become a living creature merely by serving as the cause of the living creature, the logical absurdity would remain as before.

In response to the opponent's objection, and addressing the view that consciousness does not need to be preceded by a consciousness of a similar type, our own system presents the following logical absurdity:

If consciousness were only generated by physical phenomena such as the ovum and sperm of the parents, it would follow that all the elements have the attribute of serving as the seeds or substantial causes of living beings born in one of the six realms. One would not be able to find anywhere a single instance of one of the four or five elements that was not able to serve as the substantial cause of a living being born from moisture and warmth, and so forth.

Here, "parts of earth and other elements" refers to instances of the elements. The phrase "born from warmth and moisture, and so forth" indicates the *four types of birth* (Tib: *skye gnas bzhi*). The four types are: (1) birth from a womb, (2) birth from an egg, (3) birth from warmth and moisture, and (4) instantaneous birth<sup>99</sup>.

Sentient beings who take birth in one of the six realms are necessarily born by way of one of the four types of birth.

Therefore, Dharmakirti argues that if sentient beings born by way of the four types of birth were only the results of the elements (not of a former continuum of consciousness) there would be no element that could not serve as the substantial cause of any of those beings. The reason is as follows:

The opponent asserts that in the case of a human, the elements that make up the ovum and sperm of his parents are the substantial cause of his conceptual mental awareness (and of his remaining aggregates). They are the substantial cause of that consciousness since they act as its cause, and become or change into the consciousness.

Dharmakirti contends that if the elements that are part of the ovum and sperm were indeed the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, it would follow that *all* elements anywhere would be able to serve as the substantial cause of that consciousness. They could serve as such a cause because there is no fundamental difference among the elements in each of the four or five categories (fire, water, etc.), especially in their form as tiny particles. If the elements outside the ovum and sperm were organized in the same way as those that are part of the ovum and sperm, they would also be able to serve as the substantial cause of consciousness.

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<sup>99</sup> Examples of living beings *born from a womb* are humans and other placental mammals (*e.g.*, dogs, cats, and horses). Pouched mammals (*e.g.*, kangaroos, koalas, and wombats) also pertain to this category although they are strictly speaking not born from a womb but from their mother's pouch. Birds and monotreme mammals (*e.g.*, duck-billed platypus) are examples of beings *born from an egg*. Scorpions, frogs, and most insects are beings *born from warmth and moisture*. Although modern science holds that animals in the third category are born from eggs, the eggs differ greatly from bird eggs, for instance, as they are usually not hard-shelled but enveloped with a "moist" or gelatinous skin-like covering. Examples of beings who are *born instantaneously* are celestial beings. They do not have parents, as they do not require a period of development after conception. The same is true for those born in the hell realm. Beings of the preta realm are born instantaneously or from a womb.

Please note: here the elements in the form of tiny particles are believed to be characterized by simplicity and uniformity and thought to serve as the smallest building blocks of the physical world.

Furthermore, one could make the argument that appealing to the elements alone as the substantial cause of living beings does not provide an adequate criterion for distinguishing between sentience and non-sentience.

Gyaltsab Je adds that there would be the same absurdity if one were to assert that some elements become a living creature by serving as just the cause (not the substantial cause) of that being. The same absurdity would apply because, if one were to hold that some elements transform into a living being merely by serving as its cause it would follow – as before – that *all* the elements would be able to serve as the cause of (and thus become) a living being.

Alternatively, it would follow that it is not feasible that living creatures with red heads and yellow bodies and those which are different – with reverse [features] – are born in water that was filtered and not polluted, because they would be born merely from the elements as their causes. Our system does not have the flaw of [this] unfeasibility since all living creatures have the entity of being [the result] of karmic seeds.

Gyaltsab Je provides another interpretation of the last line of the verse from the *Pramanavarttika* cited above (“*Therefore, all [the elements have] the entity of being seeds*”):

If the mind of a newly-born being were to arise solely from the elements and not from a former continuum of consciousness, it would not be possible for insects with different physical characteristics to be born in a purified body of water. For instance, insects with red heads and yellow bodies *and* insects with yellow heads and red bodies would not be found in such water.

This argument is based on an assumption that it is on account of pollutants in the water such as sewage, paint, fertilizer, and so forth that the bodies of water-born insects have different sizes, shapes, and colors. Gyaltsab Je contends that if the elements were the substantial cause of living beings and thus of insects born in a body of water that is purified of any pollutants, it would not be possible for insects of different sizes, shapes and colours to emerge from that water. He argues that it does not make sense to assert that the physical elements alone are responsible for such variety.

From a Buddhist point of view, for living beings to be born with diverse shapes, colors, etc. is the result of a vast range of different karmic actions accumulated in past lives.

Of course, from a modern scientific perspective, the example is problematic since it is questionable whether the filtered water Gyaltsab Je describes is in fact free from different types of microscopic insect eggs resulting in the emergence of diverse species of insects.

Another example would be identical twins who share the same DNA and were genetically identical at the time of conception. During fetal development and after birth, the twins’ cells undergo numerous subtle genetic mutations, etc. resulting in slight physical differences. Yet neither those differences nor the different experiences they encounter inside and outside the womb can account for some very different personality traits, with one twin, for example, being extremely intelligent and the other slow-witted; one being quiet and withdrawn and the other outgoing and sociable.

Even if one were to assert that their distinct personalities are the result of genetic changes or different environmental influences, this does not explain why those *particular* changes or influences occurred.

From a Buddhist point of view, the differences between the twins reflect the different karmic actions and dissimilar karmic seeds they individually accumulated over a

multitude of past lives. Karma explains why they are human, were conceived as twins by particular parents, and have a particular pattern of DNA. It explains why their genetic material, their cells etc. change in specific ways, and why they have different personalities.

Vasubandhu says in the *Abhidharmakosha* (Tib: *mngon pa mdzod, Treasury of Knowledge*):

*The various different worlds are created by karma.*

Regarding the different types of karma, it is owing to *projecting karma*<sup>100</sup> that the twins are conceived as humans, while a large variety of different *completing karmas* determine the genetic material they receive, who their parents are, whether they are male or female, which physical changes they undergo inside and outside the womb, what environment they are born in, what experiences they encounter, and so forth.

Personality traits the twins may already have as babies –not taught to them by others – such as adaptability, keenness, persistence, and so forth, are considered to be mainly the result of familiarity with those characteristics in a past life. Other traits (such as generosity, dishonesty, aggressiveness, etc.) that were not taught but do manifest naturally – possibly as the twins grow older – are likewise understood to be mainly induced by familiarity with those traits in a former life.

This does not contradict the commonly accepted view in the West that children are the result of ‘nature and nurture’. The Buddhist teaching on the law of karma offers a complementary insight that explains a person’s tendencies, abilities, likes and dislikes not directly linked to DNA or the environment (*e.g.*, when someone’s gender identity is different than the sex displayed at birth). It also explains why a person has a *particular* DNA, is born in a *particular* environment, and so forth.

Karma may further provide the rationale for the way people can be strongly attracted to or strangely repulsed by one another upon meeting for the first time. In the case of “love at first sight”, the instant feeling of attraction and intimacy may indicate that two people who are meeting for the first time in this lifetime had a romantic relationship in a past life. If that relationship occurred in a not so distant past life, there could still be a very strong karmic connection between them resulting in the sudden feeling of attraction and a sense of having known the other person for a long time.

According to the second interpretation of the last line from the *Pramanavarttika*, the line would read in English:

*Therefore, all [living creatures have] the entity of being [the result of karmic] seeds.*

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<sup>100</sup> There are different ways of categorizing karmic actions. One way to divide them is into (1) projecting karma and (2) completing karma.

Projecting or propelling karma is a ripening cause that is responsible for the kind of rebirth we take in samsara. It projects us into our future life by serving as the main cause that determines whether we are born as a celestial being, a human, or an animal, etc. A projecting karma leaves a karmic imprint in our mental continuum which ripens at life’s end and projects us into another birth in samsara. Projecting karma is either virtuous or non-virtuous; there is no neutral projecting karma. *Virtuous* projecting karma causes rebirth in a higher realm (human, semi- celestial or celestial of the Desire, Form or Formless Realms) whereas *non-virtuous* projecting karma causes rebirth in a lower realm (animal, preta or hell realms).

While projecting karma determines in which samsaric realm one is born, numerous different completing karmas determine the other features or experiences of that life: whether one’s life is pleasant or unpleasant; whether one is rich or poor, beautiful or ugly; who one’s parents are, what country one is born in, and so forth. In the scriptures, the analogy is usually creating a painting. Drawing the outline of the painting is analogous to what projecting karma does, and filling in the details of color and highlight is analogous to completing karma. However, virtuous completing karma does not necessarily ripen in one of the higher rebirths, and non-virtuous completing karma does not necessarily ripen in one of the lower realms.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Thus, if the sense powers, etc. were to arise  
Independently of their [earlier continuums of similar] types,  
Just as one element thoroughly would become a living being  
All [the elements] with no distinction would become [living beings].*

Hence, it **would** follow that **just as one element becomes a living being, all** [the elements] **would become** [living beings] because **the sense powers, etc.**, would arise merely from the elements, **independently of their** [earlier continuums of] similar **types**. It follows that there is a pervasion, because **if** [the sense powers, etc.] **were to arise** thus, there would be **no distinction** between causes and conditions that are and those that are not generated as a living creature.

Dharmakirti concludes: Therefore, if a living being's five aggregates were the substantial result of the elements it would follow that just as one element (together, of course, with other elements) is the substantial cause of and thus becomes a living being, *all* the elements could become living beings. This is because, according to the opponent, (the potential of) the sense powers, awareness, etc. would only be the results of the elements comprising the parents' ovum and sperm and would not depend on their earlier continuums of a similar type. That statement has a pervasion (*i.e.*, if awareness, etc. were just the result of the elements of the ovum and sperm and did not depend on their earlier continuums, *all* the elements could become a living being) because if awareness, etc. were to be generated in the way just described, there would be no difference between those elements that can be generated and those that cannot be generated as a living being.

[Someone:] Well, then, do you not also accept that the conceptual mental awareness is generated indirectly by the sense powers?

From the way he poses the question, an opponent seems to see a contradiction in our own system's assertions: On the one hand, our own system contests the view that physical phenomena such as the elements act as the substantial cause of the conceptual mental consciousness. On the other, the opponent believes that according to our own system, physical phenomena such as the elements are the indirect cause of the conceptual mental consciousness. The opponent now enquires about that latter assertion.

[Response:] In general, something that merely assists [a result] is not [that result's] special indispensable cause. Yet, when the conceptual mental awareness itself is comes to an end, it is the basis for the sense powers to come to a halt.

Our own system replies that the sense powers merely help *particular* mental awarenesses to arise by serving as their indirect cooperative condition; the sense powers are not, as the opponent believes, the indirect cooperative condition of the conceptual mental consciousness in general.

An example of a mental awareness that is the indirect result of a sense power is a conceptual consciousness thinking about a sense object, which was indirectly generated by any of the sense powers. A conceptual mental awareness apprehending a table, for instance, is generated indirectly by an eye sense power to which the table appears, by way of the eye sense power first giving rise to an eye consciousness perceiving the table, which in turn induces the conceptual mental awareness that thinks about the table. Here the conceptual mental awareness is generated indirectly, for the eye sense power only gives rise to it after it has directly generated the eye consciousness.

Whereas the sense powers do serve as an indirect cause of some conceptual mental awarenesses, this does not mean that they are the *special indispensable cause* (Tib: *ldog*

*bye kyi rgyu khyad par can*) or a *special base* (Tib: *rten khyad par can*) of the conceptual mental consciousness in general.

The conceptual mental consciousness, on the other hand, is a special base of the sense powers (and of the body in general) since the existence or non-existence of the conceptual mental awareness is the basis for determining the existence or non-existence of the sense powers.

The reason for this is as follows:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*When the sense powers are individually impaired,  
The mental awareness is not impaired,  
[Yet] when this [conceptual mental awareness] changes,  
One also sees the changes [in the sense powers].* v.41

Regarding the subject, this conceptual mental awareness, the eye and other **sense powers** are not its special base, because **when** they **are individually impaired** by eye floaters, etc. [the conceptual mental awareness] **is not impaired**.

[The mental awareness by contrast] is a special base of the eye and other sense powers, because it is a base [from the point of view of being] of a different identity than them, and [because] **when this** [mental consciousness] **changes** through grief, etc., one **also sees the changes** in those [sense powers].

In order for something to be the *special indispensable cause* of a phenomenon it has to be the *special base* of that phenomenon, for an *special indispensable cause* and a *special base* are synonymous.

However, the eye sense power, ear sense power, etc. are not the *special base* of the conceptual mental awareness, because any positive or negative changes to the sense powers does not necessarily positively or negatively affect the conceptual mental consciousness. This is because when a disease impairs any of the sense powers, it does not necessarily impair that consciousness.

For instance, in the case of someone suffering from eye floaters<sup>101</sup>, although the eye sense power is affected by the ailment in that shapes and colors no longer appear to it in the way they appeared before the illness, the functions of the conceptual mental awareness such as analyzing an object, concentrating on it, etc. are not affected.

Some may argue that the eye sense power is a special base of the mental consciousness since the conceptual mental awareness is adversely affected as a result of the eye sense power being adversely affected by the floaters. It is affected because it feels distressed owing to the ailment's debilitating impact on the eye.

But our own system disagrees because (a) the mental consciousness does not *necessarily* feel upset (there are people who do not lose their composure on account of such an impairment), (b) the mental consciousness may also feel upset when another person suffers from floaters, and (c) although the eye sense power is impaired, the ability of the mental consciousness, for instance, to think about, concentrate on, analyze, and comprehend its object is not affected, as mentioned above.

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<sup>101</sup> Eye floaters (Tib: *rab rib*) is an impairment that most commonly occurs as a result of age-related changes in the vitreous, the jelly-like substance that fills the eyeballs and helps maintain their round shape. Over time, the vitreous partially liquefies – a process that causes it to pull away from the eyeball's interior surface. As the vitreous shrinks and sags, it clumps and gets stringy. Fragments of this debris block some of the light passing through the eye, casting tiny shadows on the retina, which causes the appearance of squiggly lines, hairlike strings etc. slowly moving from side to side or up and down within the field of vision. In the Buddhist scriptures, this appearance is described as *the appearance of falling hairs* (Tib: *skra shad 'dzags snang*).

Yet, while the sense powers are not a *special* base of the conceptual mental awareness, they can serve as a *mere* base of particular conceptual mental consciousnesses (as in the above-mentioned case of a sense power giving rise to a mental consciousness thinking about the sense object that previously appeared to the sense power).

The conceptual mental awareness, on the other hand, is a *special* base of the sense powers. Therefore, the existence or non-existence of the conceptual mental awareness is the basis for the existence or non-existence of the sense powers. Gyaltsab expresses this when he says: "...when the conceptual mental awareness itself come to an end, it is the basis for the sense powers to come to a halt...".

Khedrup explains in his *Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning*:

*...when the continuum of the mental awareness is extinguished of, the sense powers, etc. will be eradicated; yet through the extinguishing of the body, the mind is not eradicated...*

In other words, if the continuum of the mental consciousness is severed and the mental consciousness goes out of existence, the sense powers go out of existence. For instance, in the case of the last moment of an Arhat with remainder, (according to the Sautrantika system) a moment later the continuum of his mental consciousness will be severed and instead of taking another rebirth he will cease to exist.

Even before reaching liberation, if the mental consciousness of a person were hypothetically to go out of existence, the five aggregates – the entire person – would go out of existence. Only a body would be left, yet it would no longer be the body of a person with functioning sense powers.

However, if a living being does not have any sense powers – as in the case of a celestial being of the formless realm – the mental consciousness does not cease to exist. The mental consciousness in the continuum of a being in the formless realm does not perceive any sense objects; it perceives other phenomena, such as infinite space, infinite consciousness, and so forth.

Furthermore, as the special base of the sense powers the conceptual mental consciousness must have the following two attributes: (a) the conceptual mental awareness is a cause of the sense powers and (b) any positive or negative changes to the conceptual mental consciousness also positively or negatively impact the sense powers.

Gyaltsab Je mentions the fact that the conceptual mental awareness is a cause of the sense powers with the words: "it is a base [by way of being] of a different identity than those". The meaning of these words is that the conceptual mental awareness is a base of the sense powers by way of being of a different *nature* than the sense powers<sup>102</sup>.

Gyaltsab Je expresses the fact that any positive or negative changes to the mental consciousness positively or negatively affect the sense powers when he says: "...one

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<sup>102</sup> In general, there are two types of base: a phenomenon *x* is a base of another phenomenon *y* either (1) by way of *x* being of a different nature than *y* or (2) by way of *x* being of one nature with *y*.

An example of the first is a cause such as fire. Fire is a base of smoke by way of being of a different nature than smoke, because fire generates or produces fire and the two (fire and smoke) are of a different nature. They are of a different nature since they have a relationship but do not exist simultaneously. They do not exist simultaneously because the first moment of fire which generates the first moment of smoke does not exist at the same time as the first moment of smoke. Therefore, although to us it seems that fire the second moment of fire exists at the same time as the first moment of smoke but since the second moment of fire is not the cause of the first moment but the second moment of smoke

An example of the second type of base is an impermanent phenomenon, such as a table. A table is a base of its impermanence by way of being of one nature with its impermanence. This is because the table's impermanence is an attribute of the table and the two (the table and its impermanence) are therefore of one nature. They are of one nature since they have a relationship and exist simultaneously (*i.e.*, they arise and disintegrate at the same time).

sees that when this [mental consciousness] is changed by grief, etc., those [sense powers] also are changed“.

For instance, in the case of a conceptual mental awareness experiencing grief, depression or anxiety, not only does the experience weaken the capability of the mental consciousness to concentrate, analyse, or remember things, it also contributes to a wide array of physical problems linked to the sense powers. This is particularly noticeable when the negative mental states are intense and persistent.

Prolonged grief or depression not only causes insomnia, chronic fatigue, and a heightened sensitivity to aches and pains, it also leads to a diminished sense of sight, smell, and taste<sup>103</sup>.

Intense and lasting anxiety (closely linked to depression) is found to adversely affect all five sense powers<sup>104</sup>.

On the other hand, positive mental states such as contentment, love, and gratitude have a wholesome, balancing and calming influence on the body, and thus positively affect the senses.

Please note that the four lines from the *Pramanavarttika* cited above (“*When the sense powers are individually impaired / The mental consciousness is not impaired / [Yet] when this [conceptual mental awareness] changes / One also sees the changes [in the sense powers].*”) examine whether the mental consciousness and the sense powers that pertain to the *same* life serve as each others’ special base. Then in the context of determining the special base of the mental awareness in general, the next four lines reveal the special base of a past life that gives rise to both the mental consciousness and the sense powers of the present life.

[Someone:] Well, then, what is the [special] base of the mental awareness?

Here an opponent thinks that if the elements and the sense powers are not the special base of the mental awareness, there may be the fault that the mental consciousness does not have a special base. But if it does have a special base, the opponent wonders what it is.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Therefore, the base of the abiding awareness  
Is an awareness: some [karma that the present awareness] depends on.*

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<sup>103</sup> Scientific research has shown that depression is responsible for reduced sensitivity of the olfactory bulbs – the brain structures involved in the perception of odor – resulting in a diminished sense of smell. It is also held accountable for a decrease of the neurotransmitter dopamine which, according to one theory, may adversely affect the sensory input in the neurons of the eye and result in an impairment of the visual sense (so the world appears “dull and grey” to a depressed person). Some scientists believe that depression may lower the output of the neurotransmitters serotonin and noradrenaline, with a decrease of serotonin reducing the ability to taste sweet and bitter and a decrease of noradrenaline reducing the ability to taste bitter and sour. Such decrease results in a diminished sense of taste and possibly a loss of appetite.

<sup>104</sup> Anxiety has a negative affect on the five senses for the following reasons: (1) the release of adrenaline dilates the pupils and leads to bright flashes, blurry vision, or tunnel vision. (2) with regard to hearing, there is some evidence that it causes auditory hallucinations. (3) it heightens sensitivity to bad odors or, owing to a build-up of mucus, diminishes the ability to smell. (4) there is some evidence that anxiety changes taste buds, inducing the experience of strange tastes. Some people report a metallic taste, others a salty taste, and others a lack of various types of tastes. It should also be noted that anxiety causes excess salivation and acid reflux - both of which might also change the ability to taste. (5) lastly, anxious hyperventilation causes numbness and tingling. Some people report burning sensations on their skin. Anxiety also causes the experience of hot or cold, especially when coming into contact with things that differ in temperature. Likewise, many people develop heightened sensitivity to pain and discomfort, and others experience a positive touch in a negative way, such as when holding hands with someone.

[Response:] There is no fault such that this conceptual mental awareness that pertains to a present ripened [effect], abides without a [special] base. This is because **some** previous karma of volition, **a** previous **awareness** of a corresponding type **on** which [the present mental awareness] **depends**, is the [special] **base** of this presently **abiding** mental **awareness**, a ripened [effect].

Our own system replies that the special base of the present mental consciousness in the continuum of an ordinary living being is found in a former life. An example of such a base is a *karma of volition*, a mental karma that was accumulated in a past life and that serves as the projecting or completing karma of that mental consciousness.

There are different ways of categorizing karmic actions. One way is to divide them into (1) karma of volition and (2) volitional karma.

(1) Karma of volition refers to karma of the mind, *i.e.*, the mental factor of volition that induces and thus precedes karma of speech or of the body.

(2) Volitional karma is verbal or physical karma. This means that it refers to the mental factor of volition that is present *during* an action of the speech or the body<sup>105</sup>.

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<sup>105</sup> The proponents of all four Buddhist philosophical tenet systems assert that (1) karma of volition (Tib: *sems pa'i las*) is necessarily karma of the mind, while (2) volitional karma (Tib: *bsam pa'i las*) is either karma of speech or karma of the body. However, they differ with regard to what they mean by karma of the body, speech and mind:

According to the Sautrantika, Chittamatra, and Madhyamika Svatantrika tenet systems, karma refers solely to the *mental factor of volition*. This means that whatever is a karma of body, speech or mind is a consciousness, for it is volition. Volition is one of the five mental factors that are concomitant with and thus accompany *every* main mind (the other four mental factors are feeling, discernment, attention, and contact).

The proponents of those three tenet systems assert that *karma of volition* refers to the mental factor of volition that leads to any karma of the body or speech. Karma of the body or speech is always *preceded* by a virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral mental factor of volition that initiates or induces a physical or verbal action. Therefore, in the case of killing, the mental factor that induces and thus precedes the act of killing is a *karma of volition*. However, the mental factor of volition concomitant with the mental consciousness (in the continuum of the killer) *during* the actual act of killing is not a *karma of volition* but a *volitional karma*.

*Volitional karma* does not refer to actual physical or verbal actions but to mental actions, *i.e.*, the mental factors of volition concomitant with the mental consciousnesses that *accompany* a particular volitional physical or verbal action. Taking the example of killing, the mental factor of volition planning to kill someone (*karma of volition*) induces a later volition that directs the body *during* the act of killing. That later volition which is present at the time of the physical act of killing is a *volitional karma* of the body. Similarly, a volitional verbal action is preceded by a volition wishing to say something (*karma of volition*). The *karma of volition* then induces a later *volitional karma* of the speech, which corresponds to the mental factor of volition that is present at the time of the verbal action and directs the voice. Therefore, karma of the body or karma of the speech does not refer to a physical or verbal action respectively but a mental action, *i.e.*, the mental factor of volition.

Asanga says in his *Abhidharma-samuccaya* (Tib: *mngon pa kun btus, Compendium of Knowledge*):

*What is volition? It is the mental karma that involves the mind; it acts to engage the mind in virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral actions.*

According to the Vaibhashika and Madhyamika Prasangika tenet systems, karma of the body and speech does not refer to the mental factor of volition. In fact, whatever is a mental factor of volition is necessarily karma of the mind and thus *karma of volition*. Therefore, *karma of volition* refers to both the mental factor of volition that *precedes* the physical act of killing and the mental factor of volition that manifests *during* the act of killing.

*Volitional karma* refers to *any* volitional physical or verbal action that is motivated by the preceding *karma of volition*. In the case of killing, *karma of volition*, *i.e.* the volition at the time of planning or merely wishing to kill, induces another mental factor of volition that directs the body *during* the act of killing. Both volitions – prior and during the act of killing – are *karma of volition*. The actual physical act of killing, on the other hand, is karma of the body and thus *volitional karma*.

Also, a volitional verbal action is preceded by the volition wishing to say something. The volition to say something induces another mental factor of volition that manifests during the act of speaking and directs the voice. Both volitions are karma of volition. The actual verbal action of speaking is karma of the speech and hence *volitional karma*. Thus, karma of the body is a verbal action, while karma of speech is a physical action.

Vasubhandu says in his *Abhidharmakosha* (Tib: *mngon pa mdzod, Treasury of Knowledge*):

*The various different worlds are created by karma.  
Karma is both volition and what volition generates.  
Volition is mental karma;  
What it generates are physical and verbal karma*



Another way to categorize karma is into: (1) projecting karma and (2) completing karma. (1) Projecting karma is karma that is responsible for rebirth in one of the six realms of samsara (the celestial, semi-celestial, human, animal, preta or hell realm), while (2) completing karma determines the remaining aspects and experiences of that rebirth<sup>106</sup>

An ordinary being's karma of volition that is concomitant with a mental consciousness is either a projecting karma or a completing karma. Similarly, an ordinary being's volitional karma that is concomitant with a mental consciousness is necessarily one of the two.

Karma of volition that is the special base of the mental awareness of this life is, as Gyaltsab Je puts it, "a previous awareness of a corresponding type on which [the present mental consciousness] depends".

The mental karma that is the special base of this life's mental consciousness is a "previous awareness" since it is the mental factor of volition that is concomitant with a mental consciousness, and it manifested in a past life – in the immediately preceding life or a life before that.

Also, the mental karma that is the special base of this life's mental consciousness is "of a corresponding type on which [the present mental consciousness] depends" because that karma is either the projecting or completing karma of the present mental consciousness. This means that particular experiences, attributes, etc. of the present mental consciousness correspond to and are generated in reliance on that type of karma.

Yet a karma of volition from a past life, which is the projecting or completing karma of this life's mental consciousness, is only an example of that consciousness' special base. Further examples are *volitional karma* as well as other mental factors or main minds from a past life that serve as the substantial cause or the special cooperative condition of this life's mental consciousness.

Gyaltsab Je mentions that the present mental consciousness in the continuum of an ordinary living being is a *ripened effect* ("...this conceptual mental awareness that pertains to a present ripened [effect]..." and "...this presently **abiding mental awareness**, a ripened [effect].).

A ripened effect (Tib: *rnam smin gyi 'bras bu*) has three main attributes: (1) it is necessarily neutral, *i.e.*, neither virtuous nor non-virtuous, (2) it is a living being's aggregate, and (3) has been generated by its ripening cause (Tib: *rnam smin gyi rgyu*) a contaminated virtuous or non-virtuous phenomenon.

In general, the mental consciousness of an ordinary being is neutral, although there are instances of that consciousness that are virtuous and instances that are non-virtuous.

Further, it is one of the five aggregates and the result of its ripening cause, for instance, a projecting karma. A projecting karma is a ripening cause and thus necessarily a contaminated virtuous<sup>107</sup> or non-virtuous karma; there is no projecting karma that is neutral.

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<sup>106</sup> For an explanation of projecting karma, please see note 97 on page 191.

<sup>107</sup> Please note that there are two types of virtuous karma: (1) contaminated virtuous karma and (2) uncontaminated virtuous karma. Contaminated virtuous karma refers to a virtuous volitional action that is under the control of an affliction such as ignorance or attachment, while uncontaminated virtuous karma is a virtuous volitional action that is not under the control of any affliction. An example of a contaminated virtuous karma is the mental factor of volition concomitant with a mental consciousness engaging in generosity that was induced by self-grasping. An example of an uncontaminated virtuous karma is the mental factor of volition concomitant with the meditative absorption directly realizing selflessness.

Non-virtuous karma is always under the control of the afflictions and therefore non-virtuous.

This explanation is based on Asanga's *Compendium of Knowledge* in which Asanga says that a contaminated phenomenon is contaminated in any of six different ways (Tib: *zag pa'i sgo drug*). These six ways relate to the afflictions.

Projecting karma that is the ripening cause of the mental consciousness in the continuum of a being in a higher realm (the human or celestial realm) is virtuous, while projecting karma that is the ripening cause of the mental consciousness in the continuum of a being in a lower realm (the hell, preta or animal realm) is non-virtuous.

The way a projecting karma gives rise to its ripening effect, this life's mental consciousness in the continuum of an ordinary living being is as follows:

If we consider the case of someone who is a human in the immediately preceding life, while in the present life has been born as an animal: in a past life, a projecting karma (*i.e.*, a conceptual mental factor of volition that is a karma of body, speech or mind and holds the potential to project the living being's mental consciousness into an animal rebirth) manifested in the continuum of that being.

After the karma had arisen, it left behind a karmic imprint (which also holds the potential for an animal birth) in the being's mental consciousness. Since an ordinary being is under the control of karma and affliction, at the time of death that ended the immediately preceding human life, when the human mental consciousness was in the process of separating from the human body, craving for the body or the self, etc. arose. That craving grew stronger and eventually activated (among that being's countless different projecting karmic seeds) the previously accumulated karmic seed that was left by the projecting animal karma. Once the karmic seed had been activated, the mental consciousness inevitably separated from the human body, and through the power of the projecting animal karma was briefly born as an intermediate state being (Tib: *bar do ba*) associated with the animal realm and thereafter as an animal – an animal with a particular body and a particular mental consciousness.

This process is explained in detail in the presentation on the twelve links<sup>108</sup>.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*As it is the cause of the sense powers,  
Thus the sense powers have arisen from the awareness.*

**The sense powers have arisen from** the conceptual mental **awareness** because some previous [mental factor of] volition that had craving for the body **is the** projecting **cause of the sense powers** such as the eye and so forth.

Like this life's mental consciousness, the present (potential of the) sense powers in the continuum of an ordinary sentient being are also ripened effects because they (1) are neutral, *i.e.*, neither virtuous nor non-virtuous, (2) are part of a living being's aggregates, and (3) have been generated by their ripening cause, a contaminated virtuous or non-virtuous phenomenon.

The (potential of the) sense powers have been generated by their ripening cause that is either virtuous or non-virtuous since they are the ripened result of a projecting karma. That projecting karma was a conceptual mental consciousness, *i.e.*, a conceptual mental factor of volition associated with the body, speech or mind and manifested in a past life.

In the above-mentioned case of someone who is a human in the immediately preceding life, while in the present life he has been born as an animal, the projecting karma that propelled the mental consciousness in the present animal rebirth also propelled the (potential of the) sense powers into that rebirth. Therefore, this karma is not only the special base of the present life's mental consciousness but also of the (potential of the) present sense powers.

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<sup>108</sup> For a detailed description of the twelve links, please see H.H. the Dalai Lama's *The Meaning of Life* [Wisdom Publications: 2005] and Geshe Sonam Rinchen and Ruth Sonam's *How Karma Works* [Snow Lion: New York, 2006].

The phrase, “some previous [mental factor of] volition that has craving for the body” does not literally mean that the projecting karma that is the special base of this life’s mental consciousness and the (potential of the) sense powers is necessarily concomitant with and thus arises together with craving for the body. Instead, it means that the living being in whose continuum the projecting karma arose and who is later reborn as a result of the ripening of that karma has not yet overcome craving for his own body, etc. Such craving could be actively present in that being’s continuum or it could lie dormant.

Then when that craving manifests at the time of death that ends the immediately preceding life, it causes the actualization of the projecting karma and thus another rebirth in samsara.

In summary, the projecting karma that propelled the mental consciousness and the (potential of the) sense powers into the present life is the special base of that mental consciousness and (the potential of) the sense powers.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If there was a projecting [cause] of such [a subsequent continuum],  
Later [the sense powers] will also [connect with the subsequent continuum] – as before.*

**Later**, the sense powers, etc. of an ordinary being at the point of death **will also – as before** – connect with a subsequent continuum of a similar type, because **there was a projecting cause of such** a [subsequent] continuum of a similar type [before].

Furthermore, when an ordinary being dies, a projecting karma will cause (the potential of) the sense powers, etc. associated with this life to connect with (*i.e.*, transform into) their subsequent continuum associated with the next life. The same had occurred before, at the time of death that ended the immediately preceding life, when a different projecting karma caused (the potential of) the sense powers associated with the immediately preceding life to connect or become (the potential of) the sense powers associated with the present life.

As before, at the time of death that ends this life, craving for one’s body, etc. arises and activates a particular projecting karmic seed accumulated in the present or any past life. Once the seed is activated it propels (the potential of) the sense powers together with the mental consciousness and (the potential of) exhalations and inhalations into a future rebirth.

In brief, this outline presents the reasons for the existence of past and future lives. Dharmakirti first sets forth a reason for the existence of past lives by citing a syllogism that establishes that (the potential of) exhalations and inhalations, (the potential of) the sense powers, and mental awarenesses such as distractedness, etc. in the continuum of a newly-born ordinary being all depend on their respective substantial causes, former continuums of a similar type (“*When one has taken birth / Exhalations, inhalations, sense powers, and awarenesses / Do [not] exist independently of similar types.*”). Since the subject of the syllogism consists of three different types of phenomena it can be expanded to three syllogisms.

Once one has realized that (the potential of) the exhalations and inhalations, etc. of a newly-born ordinary being depend on their respective continuums of a similar type, one comes to realize that those phenomena are generated by their substantial causes, and thus that there are past lives.

Thereafter, having established the existence of past lives, Dharmakirti concludes that a newly-born ordinary being’s (potential of the) exhalations and inhalations is not generated by the body alone – as asserted by some non-Buddhist Indian philosophers – because they

are the substantial result of their earlier continuums (“*They are not generated by the body alone*”).

If it were the case that the (potential of the) respirations, awareness, etc. were the substantial results of the body, the following absurdity would occur: all the elements would be able to become living beings (“*Since [otherwise] there would be a logical absurdity ...*”). This is explained in more detail below.

Dharmakirti then sets forth the reasoning for the existence of future lives. He argues that earlier – in dependence on the reasons establishing the existence of past lives – one has come to see or realize that the continuum of the mental consciousness, etc. associated with the previous life is able to connect with the mental consciousness, etc. of this life. No additional cause was required for these two continuums to connect. Hence, no additional cause is required for the last moment of this life’s mental awareness to connect with the mental awareness of the next life, which is why there is no reason for there not to be any future lives (“*...It has been seen / That [the earlier continuum] has the ability to connect. / There was not any [other cause that was required]; / [Thus it is not feasible that] by some [reason] there is no connecting later*”).

To provide a more extensive presentation of the logical absurdity cited above, Dharmakirti then cites two verses. In the first, he says that if (the potential of) exhalations and inhalations, mental awareness, etc. were the substantial results of the elements, *all* the elements would be able to serve as the seeds or substantial causes of living beings. This is because there would be no instances of the earth elements, water elements, etc. that would not have potential to be generated as or transformed into living beings born from warmth and moisture, and so forth (“*There are by no means parts of earth, etc. anywhere / That will not be generated as living beings / Born from warmth and moisture, and so forth. / Therefore, all [the elements have] the entity of being seeds.*”)

Alternatively, the meaning of the last line (“*Therefore, all [the elements have] the entity of being seeds*”) is: if consciousness and the other aggregates were only the result of the elements, it would follow that one would not be able to find a variety of different living beings in, for instance, a purified body of water. Therefore, from a Buddhist point of view, although the elements serve as a cause of living beings’ bodies, the variety of beings’ physical and mental attributes is primarily the result of the different karmic actions they accumulated in the past. According to this second interpretation, the content of the brackets of the line from the *Pramanavarttika* reads slightly differently: *Therefore, all [living creatures have] the entity of being [the result of karmic] seeds.*

With the second verse that expands on the absurdity cited above, Dharmakirti is saying that if (the potential of) the sense powers, etc. were to arise independently of their earlier continuums of a similar type, it would follow that just as one of the elements serves as the substantial cause of and thus becomes a living being, all the elements without distinction would be able to become a living being (“*Thus, if the sense powers, etc. arise / Independently of their [earlier continuum of a similar] type / Just as one element thoroughly becomes a living being / All [the elements] without distinction become [living beings]*”).

Regarding the special base of the conceptual mental consciousness, the sense powers are not a special base of the conceptual mental consciousness because when the sense powers are impaired, by an illness for instance, the mental consciousness is not necessarily affected. The conceptual mental consciousness, on the other hand, serves as a special base of the sense powers because changes to the mental consciousness result in changes to the sense powers (“*If the sense powers are individually impaired / The mental awareness is not impaired / [Yet] if this [conceptual mental awareness] changes / The changes are also seen [in the sense powers].*”)

Yet if the elements and the sense powers are not the special base of the conceptual mental consciousness, it does not mean that the mental consciousness does not have a special base. The special base of the mental consciousness is a mental awareness from a previous life, such as a karma of volition that serves as the projecting karma of the present mental consciousness and on which that mental consciousness depends. Not only is that karma the special base of the present mental consciousness, it is also the special base of this life's (potential of the) sense powers. As that karma is a conceptual mental awareness that is the ripening cause of the present (potential of the) sense powers, the (potential of the) sense powers have arisen from that awareness (*"Therefore, the base of the abiding awareness / Is an awareness: some [karma that the present awareness] depends on / As it is the cause of the sense powers / Thus the sense powers have arisen from the awareness"*).

Furthermore, at the time of death in the immediately preceding life (the potential of) the sense powers connected with their subsequent continuum, (the potential of) the sense powers of this life, owing to a projecting karma. Therefore, at the time of death, this life's (potential of the) sense powers will also connect with a subsequent continuum, (the potential of) the sense powers associated with the next life. This takes place – as before – in dependence on the ripening of a projecting karma (*"If there was a projecting [cause] of such [a subsequent continuum] / Later [the sense powers] will also [connect with the subsequent continuum] – as before"*).

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the meaning of a continuum?
2. What is the meaning of 'an earlier continuum of a similar type'?
3. What do some scholars suggest as regards the meaning of exhalations and inhalations, the continuum of which proceeds to future lives?
4. What do some scholars suggest with respect to the meaning of sense powers, the continuum of which proceeds to future lives?
5. What syllogism establishing the existence of past lives is cited in this outline?
6. What syllogism establishing the existence of future lives is cited in this outline?
7. What is the meaning of 'a knower'?
8. Why is, "*because it is a knower possessing attachment*" cited as the reason of the syllogism establishing the existence of past lives, instead of "*because it is a knower*"?
9. What is the main purpose for citing the syllogism establishing the existence of past lives?
10. What is the main purpose for citing the syllogism establishing the existence of future lives?
11. What are the four types of birth?
12. What is the alternative interpretation of the line from the *Pramanavarttika*, "*Therefore, all [the elements have] the entity of being seeds*" and how does the line read according to that second interpretation?
13. In what way are the sense powers of *mere assistance* to the conceptual mental consciousness?
14. What is the meaning of *an indispensable cause*?
15. Why are the sense powers not *the indispensable cause* of the conceptual mental consciousness?
16. What is the meaning of *a special base*?

17. Why are the sense powers not the special base of the conceptual mental consciousness?
18. What is the difference between an *indispensable cause* and a *special base*?
19. Why is the conceptual mental consciousness the special base of the sense powers?
20. What is the meaning of a *ripening cause* and a *ripened effect*?

## **ELIMINATING [THE OBJECTION THAT] THOSE [REASONS] ARE FAULTY**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Eliminating [the objection that the reasons] contradict the scriptures
- (2) Eliminating [the objection that the reasons] contradict reasoning

The following two outlines eliminate objections to the reasons presented in the previous outline ("Setting forth the reasons"):

## **ELIMINATING [THE OBJECTION THAT THE REASONS] CONTRADICT THE SCRIPTURES**

Here, our own system refutes the objection that some of the reasons presented in the previous outline contradict the Buddhist scriptures.

[Someone:] Well, then, this contradicts the teacher's explanation that the mental consciousness depends on the body: "Body and mind are contingent on one another."

An opponent argues that our own system's assertion that the body is not the substantial cause and thus the special base of the mental consciousness contradicts the following quote by the Buddha: "Body and mind are contingent on one another".

The opponent believes that the quote literally means that the body and the mental consciousness depend on each other. Since the opponent also asserts that the body is the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, he considers the quote to be in support of his assertion. The reason is as follows: according to the opponent, if the body and the mental consciousness depend on each other, the mental consciousness depends on the body. If the mental consciousness depends on the body, the mental consciousness must be the result of the body because (a) the body and the mental consciousness are of a different nature and (b) the mental consciousness depends on the body<sup>109</sup>. So – the

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<sup>109</sup> All Buddhist tenet schools except for the Madhyamika Prasangika accept that (a) if phenomenon *x* and phenomenon *y* are of a different nature and (b) *x* depends on *y*, *x* has to be the result of *y*. The reason is that according to these tenet schools, if *x* depends on *y*, there are only two possibilities for the relationship between *x* and *y*:

- (1) If *x* and *y* are of a different nature and *x* depends on *y*, *x* and *y* have a cause-effect relationship. Also, if *x* and *y* have a cause-effect relationship, while *x* depends on *y*, *x* is necessarily the result of *y*. This is because a result depends on its cause, whereas a cause does not depend on its result. For instance, in the case of a seed and a sprout, since the two do not exist at the same time, they are of a different nature. Yet, the sprout depends on the seed because the seed generates or produces the sprout.
- (2) If *x* and *y* are of one nature and *x* depends on *y*, *x* and *y* have a relationship of one being an attribute or part of the other. For instance, a tree branch is part of a tree. As the tree branch and the tree exist simultaneously and depend on one another, they are of one nature. Another example: a tree's impermanence is an attribute of the tree: as above, the two are of one nature because they exist simultaneously and depend on one another.

The followers of the Madhyamika Prasangika also accept that there are two possibilities for the relationship between *x* and *y*, *i.e.*, that if *x* and *y* have a relationship, they are connected either by a cause and effect relationship or by one being an attribute or part of the other. However, they assert that *all* phenomena depend on each other. This means a result depends on its cause and a cause depends on its result, etc. For instance, a vase depends on a pillar because a vase is different from a pillar and the vase's attribute of *being different from a pillar* depends on the pillar.

opponent argues – if the mental consciousness is the result of the body, the body has to be the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, for there are no past lives and no other phenomenon could serve as the substantial cause of the mental consciousness.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since [the body] consciousness assists [the mental consciousness]  
It is explained that the mental consciousness depends on the body.*

[Response:] There is no fault. There is a reason why the scriptures explain that the mental consciousness depends on the body: [the Buddha] explains [this] with the consideration that the body consciousness contributes to [the production of particular] mental consciousnesses; [the Buddha] does not consider [the body] to be the direct special base [of the mental consciousness].

Since the mental consciousness is the special base of the body, as explained above, our own system accepts that the body depends on the mental consciousness. But it does not assert that the mental consciousness depends on the body, for the body does not give rise to the mental consciousness. According to our own system, only specific mental awarenesses depend on the body, because they depend on parts of the body such as the sense powers. They also depend on the *body* consciousness and the other sense consciousnesses.

Therefore, in response to the opponent's argument, our own system replies that the quote by the Buddha cannot be taken literally, *i.e.*, that the part of the quote which literally states that 'the mental consciousness depends on the body' needs to be interpreted. Gyaltsab explains that what the Buddha means when he makes that statement is that particular mental consciousnesses depend on the *body* consciousness since the body consciousness serves as the cause of these mental awarenesses:

A body sense power to which a tangible object appears (*e.g.*, heat or cold) generates a body consciousness perceiving that tangible object. The body consciousness, in turn, generates the mental consciousness thinking about the tangible object. While the body consciousness generates the mental consciousness directly, the body sense power does so *indirectly*. The body consciousness is the *direct* cause of the mental consciousness thinking about the tangible object (while the body sense power is the *indirect* cause), which is why the mental consciousness thinking about the tangible object depends on the body consciousness (and the body sense power).

It is with this in mind that the Buddha says that the mental consciousness depends on the body<sup>110</sup>.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What part of the Buddhist quote, "Body and mind are contingent on one another." can be taken literally and what part needs to be interpreted?
2. What is the meaning of that quote?

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<sup>110</sup> It may seem presumptuous for someone to declare what Buddha Shakyamuni had in mind when he made a particular statement. Indeed, such interpretation is efficiently undertaken only by masters who have enough command of the Buddhist teachings to be able to distinguish between explanations that can be taken literally and those that cannot. The reason for the differences is that the Buddha was an extremely skilful pedagogue who sought to meet the needs of those present by teaching in keeping with their predispositions, interests, levels of comprehension, and so forth. At times, the Buddha deliberately articulated viewpoints that directly contradicted some of his other assertions (and thus need to be interpreted) but were most beneficial to the Buddha's immediate audience. And even though a particular view may not have reflected the position held by the Buddha himself, it served as an effective platform or stepping stone to prepare the audience to understand more advanced viewpoints at a later time.

3. Why does the body sense power serve as the indirect cause of the mental consciousness thinking about a tangible object?

## ELIMINATING [THE OBJECTION THAT THE REASONS] CONTRADICT REASONING

In this outline, our own system refutes the objection that some of the reasons presented in the previous outline contradict logical reasoning<sup>111</sup>.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*In cases where there are no sense powers, [mental] awareness  
Does not [arise]. .....*

[Someone:] **In cases where there are no sense powers** a mental **awareness does not** arise; hence, [mental awareness] depends on the body.

An opponent argues that the sense powers (and thus the body) are the substantial cause of the mental consciousness because the mental awareness depends on the sense powers, while the mental awareness and the sense powers are of a different nature. The mental consciousness depends on the sense powers since there would be no mental consciousness without the sense powers.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*.....[Without mental awareness the sense powers] also do not arise.*

[Response:] It follows that the sense powers **also** depend on the mental awareness, because without [mental awareness] the sense powers **do not arise**.

Our own system does not accept the opponent's claim that a mental consciousness does not arise without the sense powers because, as mentioned before, celestial beings in the formless realm have mental consciousness but no physical bodies and thus no sense powers.

However, without referring to this, our own system responds by arguing that according to the line of reasoning presented by the opponent, it would follow that the mental consciousness is also the substantial cause of the sense powers (and of the body) since the sense powers depend on the mental consciousness. They depend on the mental consciousness because without mental consciousness there would be no sense powers.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since in such way [the two are] each other's cause,  
Thus, they are each other's cause-possessor.*

If one were to accept [this] **in such a way**, it would follow that in reliance on [their] continuums, [the mental consciousness and the body] are **each other's cause**, because they would assist one another. If one accepted that, it would follow that in reliance on each others' continuums, they are each other's cause-possessors, because of accepting [that in reliance on their continuums, the mental consciousness and the sense powers are each other's cause].

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<sup>111</sup> Please note: from a Buddhist point of view, it is considered extremely important to examine any assertion to determine whether it contradicts (1) Buddhist scriptures or (2) logical reasoning. Of the two, the second is deemed most important, for an assertion is seen as valid if it is in accordance with logical reasoning even if it contradicts a statement by the Buddha. On the other hand, if it is in accordance with something the Buddha said but does not withstand logical analysis, it cannot be accepted.



If our own system's argument were to lead the opponent to accept that the mental awareness depends on the sense powers and thus that the mental consciousness is also the substantial cause of the sense powers and the body, the following absurdity would occur:

It would follow that the continuum of the mental consciousness and the continuum of the body serve as each other's cause since the continuum of the body would be the cause of the continuum of the mental consciousness and the continuum of the mental consciousness would be the cause of the continuum of the body.

Here, the phrase "in reliance on their continuums, the mental consciousness and the body are each other's cause" means that since both the mental consciousness and the body are continuums, if the mental consciousness and the body were each other's cause, their continuums would be each other's cause.

If the opponent were to assert that, it would follow that the continuum of the mental consciousness and the body would also serve as each other's *cause-possessors*<sup>112</sup> or results, since the continuum of the mental consciousness would be the result of the continuum of the body and the continuum of the body would be the result of the continuum of the mental consciousness.

However, it is not correct to assert that those two continuums serve as each other's cause and result, because the cause of a particular phenomenon and the result of that phenomenon are contradictory.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

[*The mental awareness does*] *not* [*arise*] *in stages from that which* [*has*] *not* [*arisen*] *in stages.*

Furthermore, if [the mental awareness] depended on the body, it would have to depend on (1) a permanent or (2) impermanent body. The first [possibility] (1) is not feasible: Regarding the subject, the body, it would follow that the mental awareness does **not** arise from it **in stages**, because [the body] is a permanent [phenomenon] **that** [has] **not** [*arisen*] **in stages**.

If, as the opponent asserts, the mental consciousness depended on the physical body, there would be only two possibilities: the mental consciousness would depend on either a permanent or an impermanent body.

It is not correct to hold that the mental consciousness depends on a permanent body because if it were to depend on a permanent body, the mental consciousness would be the result of such a body and that, in turn, would lead to the following absurdity:

It would follow that the mental consciousness is not *gradually* but instantly generated by the body. This is because the mental consciousness would be the result of a permanent phenomenon not comprising a continuum of different moments that slowly transform and thus gradually generate its resultant mental consciousness.

For instance, both a seed and a sprout are impermanent phenomena. So when the seed generates the sprout, it does so by gradually transforming into the sprout. However, if the seed were hypothetically permanent yet served as the cause of an impermanent sprout, the seed could not change moment by moment and gradually produce the sprout (for gradual transformation is characteristic of an impermanent phenomenon). Instead, it would generate the sprout instantly.

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<sup>112</sup> Please note that a *cause-possessor* (Tib: *rgyu can*) is synonymous with a result or effect. A result is a cause-possessor because it was generated by and thus *has* a cause.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[Since] it is not characterized [by relying on conditions] it does not rely [on them] either.*

[The permanent body] does not generate [the mental awareness] in stages by **relying** on conditions **either**, because [the body] **is not characterized** by [relying on] conditions.

If someone were to assert that although the body is permanent it gradually generates its resultant mental consciousness in reliance on cooperative conditions, *i.e.*, impermanent phenomena other than the body that serve as cooperative conditions of the mental consciousness, our own system would respond as follows: if the body were permanent it would not possess the attribute of relying on any condition in order to generate or produce something; a permanent phenomenon does not depend on conditions.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If the [mental] awareness gradually [arises] from the body,*

[Someone:] A later mental **awareness gradually** [arises] **from the body** which has come together with an earlier mental awareness that [has arisen] in stages; [the later mental awareness] does not arise from the body alone.

Here someone argues that even though a permanent body is the cause of the mental consciousness, the mental consciousness does not arise from the body alone. Instead, it also arises from an earlier mental consciousness that has arisen in stages since it is impermanent. Therefore, both an earlier moment of the mental consciousness *and* the body gradually generate a later moment of the mental consciousness.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*One would clearly take it that the body has stages.*

[Response:] It follows **that one would clearly take it that the body** also **has** earlier and later **stages**, because one has taken it that the body gradually generates a later mental consciousness in reliance on an earlier mental awareness.

Our own system responds that if one accepted the opponent's argument, one would have to assert that not only the mental awareness but also the permanent body is a continuum with earlier and later moments (or stages). This is because one would have accepted that a permanent body with the aid of an earlier moment of the mental consciousness gradually produced a later moment of that awareness.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Earlier moments are  
The causes of later individual moments  
That did not exist before. Therefore, one sees that  
at all times they are [each others'] causes.*

If one were to accept that [the body has earlier and later stages], it would follow that the cooperative conditions of the mental consciousness, the earlier moments of the body, are the causes of the later individual moments of the body and mind that did not exist before. This is because one accepts [that the body has earlier and later stages] and because of the argument [cited above].

If one were to accept that [the cooperative conditions of the mental consciousness, the earlier moments of the body, are the causes of the later individual moments of the body and mind], it would follow that **at all times** when [a living being] is at the point of death or newly-born, **one sees** that body and mind **are the causes** of each other's [later moments].

This is because of accepting that [the cooperative conditions of the mental consciousness, the earlier moments of the body are the causes of the later individual moments of the body and mind].

If one were to accept that the body comprises earlier and later moments, it would follow that the earlier moments of the body serve as the cause of both the later moments of the mental awareness and the later moments of the body. As Dharmakirti mentions, those later moments did not exist before, for they did not exist at the time of their cause, the earlier moments of the body (*“Earlier moments are / The causes of later individual moments / That did not exist before”*).

The earlier moments of the body would be the cause of the later moments of both the mental consciousness and the body, because they would be the cooperative condition of the later moments of the mental awareness and the substantial cause of the later moments of the body.

If one were to accept that, it would follow that the earlier moments of the body and the mental consciousness serve as the causes of each other's later moments: as mentioned above, the earlier moments of the body would be the cooperative condition of the later mental consciousness and the substantial causes of the later moment of the body, while the earlier moments of the mental consciousness would be the cooperative condition of the later moments of the body and the substantial cause of the later moments of the mental consciousness.

Furthermore, the earlier moments of the body and the mental consciousness would serve as the causes of each other's later moments *at all times*, even when a living being was newly conceived or dying. If that were the case, the mental consciousness at the time of conception would have been generated by its substantial cause, the earlier moments of the mental consciousness, while the mental consciousness at the point of death would serve as the substantial cause of the later moments of the mental consciousness. This in turn, would mean that there are past and future lives, since the the continuum of the mental consciousness existed before conception and after death.

Therefore, the logical consequence of the opponent claiming that the mental consciousness depends on the sense powers is to accept that there are past and future lives – an assertion that contradicts the opponent's principal view of consciousness being the substantial results of the elements.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why does the first opponent cited in this outline assert that without the sense powers a mental consciousness does not arise?
2. What is the response by our own system to this assertion?
3. What is a cause-possessor?
4. What is the meaning of the phrase: “in reliance on their continuums, the mental consciousness and the body are each other's cause”?
5. What faults would there be if the mental consciousness were to depend on a permanent body?
6. Why does a permanent body not have the attribute of relying on conditions?
7. What is the fault in asserting that the mental consciousness arises from both a permanent body and an earlier impermanent mental awareness?
8. If the mental consciousness were to depend on the body, why would there be past and future lives?

## REFUTING THE ESTABLISHING AGENT OF THE NON-EXISTENCE [OF PAST AND FUTURE LIVES]

The following outlines refute the establishing agent or reason cited by an opponent in order to establish the non-existence of reincarnation:

[This is divided into:]

- (1) A brief demonstration
- (2) An extensive explanation
- (3) A summary

### A BRIEF DEMONSTRATION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The reason is not ascertained
- (2) The example is not established

### THE REASON IS NOT ASCERTAINED

Here, our own system contests the veracity of the reason cited by an opponent in order to establish that there is no reincarnation:

[Someone:] The [following] reason establishes the non-existence of past and future lives: “Whatever is a death-mind is pervaded by not connecting with a later [continuum of a] similar type. For instance, like the knower at the point of death [of someone who is] free from attachment. The mind of an ordinary being at the point of death is also a death-mind”.

In order to establish the non-existence of reincarnation, an opponent cites a proof statement (“Whatever is a death-mind is pervaded by not connecting with a continuum of a similar type... The mind of an ordinary being at the point of death is also a death-mind.”).

That proof statement<sup>113</sup> expresses the following syllogism:

*Regarding the subject, the mind of an ordinary being at the point of death, it does not connect with a later continuum of a similar type, because it is a death-mind. For instance, like the knower at the point of death of someone who is free from attachment.*

The knower at the point of death of someone who is free from attachment refers to the consciousness in the continuum of the last moment of an *Arhat with remainder*. As mentioned above, a moment later the continuum of consciousness of such an *Arhat* is severed and the *Arhat* goes out of existence. According to the opponent, a knower at the point of death in the continuum of an *Arhat with remainder* here serves as an example which illustrates the syllogism’s pervasion, *i.e.*, that *whatever is a death-mind does necessarily not connect with a continuum of a similar type*.

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<sup>113</sup> As explained before (see page 6), a proof statement is a logical statement that expresses a syllogism. For instance: “Wherever there is smoke is pervaded by there being fire (in other words: wherever there is smoke, there is necessarily fire). For instance, like in a smoky kitchen. On a smoky mountain pass there is also fire.” This proof statement expresses the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, on a smoky mountain pass, there is fire because there is smoke. For instance, like in a kitchen.* Similarly: “Whatever is a product is pervaded by being impermanent (or: whatever is a product is necessarily impermanent). For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame. Sound is also impermanent.” This proof statement expresses the syllogism: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent because it is a product. For instance, like the last moment of a candle flame.*

The opponent who cites such a syllogism is a Lokayata. However, the Lokayatas do not accept the syllogism's example because they do not assert the existence of Arhats. This will be explained in the next outline.

But if you were to say that it is not a [correct] syllogism because [the reason] is contradicted by the opposite [of the predicate], then we would say that [your syllogism] is equally not a [correct] syllogism since the opposite [of the predicate] is contradicted [by our syllogism's reason].

The opponent here argues that if our own system claimed that the opponent's syllogism is flawed since the syllogism's reason is contradicted by the *opposite* of the opponent's predicate ("*it connects with a later continuum of a similar type*"), the opponent would respond that in fact our own system's syllogism is faulty, for the *opposite* of the opponent's predicate is contradicted by the reason the opponent cites ("*it is a death-mind*").

Please note that our own system asserts that the syllogism cited by the opponent is logically flawed. It is flawed since the syllogism does not have a pervasion, *i.e.*, its pervasion (*whatever is a death mind is pervaded by not connecting with a later continuum* or: *whatever is a death-mind does necessarily not connect with a later continuum of a similar type*) is not correct. According to our own system, only if one cites the opposite of the syllogism's predicate is the pervasion accurate. In other words, if instead of the predicate cited by the opponent "*it does not connect with a later continuum of a similar type*", one cites the opposite "*it connects with a later continuum of a similar type*" as the predicate, the syllogism's pervasion (*whatever is a death-mind is pervaded by connecting with a later continuum of a similar type* or: *whatever is a death-mind necessarily connects with a later continuum of a similar type*) is logically correct. This is why our own system claims that the syllogism cited by the opponent is contradicted by the *opposite* of the opponent's predicate ("*it connects with a later continuum of a similar type*").

However, the opponent responds by arguing that it is not the case that his syllogism is contradicted by the *opposite* of his syllogism's predicate. According to the opponent, the *opposite* of his predicate ("*it connects with a later continuum of a similar type*") – accepted as the predicate by our own system – is contradicted by the reason the opponent cites ("*it is a death-mind*") as part of his syllogism. The opponent holds that the *opposite* of his predicate is contradicted by the reason of his syllogism since according to the opponent, a moment after the death-mind, the mental continuum of a person is severed, and thus, whatever is a death-mind is necessarily not followed by its substantial result, an awareness of a similar type.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*It is not contradictory that the last [moment of] mind  
Connects with another mind.*

[Response:] It follows that such a reason is not a *correct reason of the observation of a contradictory pervasion*, because **it is not contradictory that the last** [moment of] a death **mind connects with another mind**.

According to the opponent, the syllogism he cites is a correct syllogism and among the

different types of correct syllogisms, it is a *correct reason* or *correct syllogism of observation of a contradictory pervasion*<sup>114</sup>.

However, in response to the opponent's argument cited above, our own system argues that the opponent's syllogism is not a *correct syllogism of observation of a contradictory pervasion* since it is not a correct syllogism. This is because the syllogism does not have a pervasion, as it is not accurate that *whatever is a death-mind does necessarily not connect with a later continuum of a similar type*. Therefore, instead of the reason ("it is a death-mind") establishing that the mind of an ordinary being at the point of death does not connect with a later continuum of a similar type, it establishes the opposite: that the mind of such a being *does* connect with a later continuum of a similar type. This is why Dharmakirti says that it not is contradictory for the last moment of a death mind to connect with a later mind ("It is not contradictory that the last [moment of] mind / Connects with another mind").

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is a *proof statement*?
2. What is "a knower at the point of death of someone who is free from attachment"? Why is such a knower cited by the opponent as the syllogism's example?
3. According to our own system, why is the syllogism cited by the opponent (*Regarding the subject, the mind of an ordinary being at the point of death, it does not connect with a later continuum of a similar type, because it is a death-mind. For instance, like the knower at the point of death of someone who is free from attachment*) not a *syllogism of observation of a contradictory pervasion*?

## THE EXAMPLE IS NOT ESTABLISHED

[This is divided into:]

- (1) [Demonstrating that according to the Lokayatas] there is no pramana establishing the example
- (2) Refuting the conception that there is pramana [establishing the example]

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<sup>114</sup> There are different ways of categorizing a correct syllogism. One categorization is into: (1) result syllogism, (2) nature syllogism, and (3) non-observation syllogism. This is considered to be the main division of correct syllogisms. In general, it combines two criteria: (a) whether the predicate is positive or negative and (b) the type of relationship between the predicate and the reason. If the predicate is negative the syllogism is a *non-observation syllogism*. If it is positive, the reason is either the result of the predicate or of one nature with it. If the reason is the result of the predicate, the syllogism is a *result syllogism*, and if it is of one nature with the predicate, it is a *nature syllogism*.

According to the opponent, the syllogism cited above, establishing the non-existence of past and future lives, is a *non-observation syllogism* because its predicate (*it does not connect with a continuum of a similar type*) – on account of the word "not" – is a negative phenomenon. Furthermore, among the different types of *non-observation syllogisms*, it is called a *correct reason of the observation of a contradictory pervasion* (Tib: 'gal khyab dmigs pa'i rtags yang dag), also referred to as a *correct reason of the observation of a contradictory object suitable to appear* (Tib: snang rung gi 'gal dmigs kyi rtags yang dag). One of the main characteristics of that kind of syllogism is that the reason is either a positive or a non-affirming negative phenomenon. According to the opponent, the syllogism he cites fulfills that criterion since the reason of his syllogism ("it is a death-mind") is a positive phenomenon. Our own system agrees that the reason of the opponent's syllogism is a positive phenomenon, but it does not accept that it is a correct reason establishing that *the mind of an ordinary being at the point of death does not connect with a later continuum of a similar type*.

For a detailed explanation of the different types of syllogisms, please see Katherine Manchester Rogers' *Tibetan Logic* [Snow Lion: New York, 2009]

**[DEMONSTRATING THAT ACCORDING TO THE LOKAYATAS] THERE IS NO PRAMANA ESTABLISHING THE EXAMPLE**

In this outline, our own system rebuts the example that is part of the syllogism cited by the opponent to establish the non-existence of reincarnation.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Also, it is accepted that some mind of an Arhat*

*[Is not an example of] there being no connecting of [an awareness with a later continuum].*

Regarding **also** the subject, **some mind of** the last [moment of an] **Arhat**, it follows that **it is** not reasonable to accept it as a correct example, compliant with the reason and the predicate, [of the syllogism] establishing that **there is no connecting of** the death-mind of an ordinary being with a later [continuum of a] similar type. This is because [according to the Lokayatas, the last moment of an Arhat] is not perceived by any pramana.

Another fault in the opponent's syllogism is that his example is not correct. The example cited is 'the awareness at the point of death of someone who is free from attachment' ("For instance, like the knower at the point of death [of someone who is] free from attachment"). As mentioned above, such an awareness refers to the last moment of the mind in the continuum of an Arhat with remainder.

However, according to the opponents who cite such a syllogism – the Lokayatas – there are no Arhats or foe-destroyers who have attained liberation from samsara. As mentioned above, Lokayatas (also referred to as Charvakas) are followers of an ancient Indian school of materialism who do not accept past and future lives, karma, liberation, or enlightenment.

Yet it is important to note that in the case of a correct syllogism cited by a challenger (here, a Lokayata) directed at a respondent (here, a follower of our own system), the challenger has to accept and realize the four parts of the syllogism: subject, predicate, reason, and example.

Hence, our own system argues that the syllogism cited by the opponent is not correct, for according to the opponent, there is no *pramana* or valid cognizer realizing the example. There is no valid cognizer realizing the example because the opponent holds that Arhats do not exist.

Please note that the phrase, "a correct example, compliant with the predicate and the reason," (Tib: *rtags chos gnyis ldan gyi mthun dpe yang dag*) denotes the example that is part of a correct syllogism. In general, such an example is described as *a correct example compliant with the predicate and the reason* because it acts as a common locus of the syllogism's reason and the syllogism's predicate<sup>115</sup>.

If [someone were to say that] the reason is not established, then this would be contradicted by [the opponent] exerting himself to negate [the existence of Arhats].

If a Lokayata opponent were to respond to our own system's argument by saying that the reason ("because [according to the Lokayatas, the last moment of an Arhat is not perceived by any pramana]") is not established, he would be indicating that he does not accept the reason. This would mean that the opponent holds that there is a

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<sup>115</sup> For example, in the case of the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is impermanent, because it is a product. For instance, like the last moment of a butterlamp flame*, the last moment of a butterlamp flame is the syllogism's example compliant with the reason and the predicate. The example is compliant with the reason and the predicate because it is both a product (the syllogism's reason) and impermanent (the syllogism's predicate).

valid cognizer realizing the mind of such an Arhat. However, that would fly in the face of the considerable effort made by the Lokayatas to disprove the possibility of liberation.

[Someone:] Well then, in your system the mind of the last [moment of an] Arhat is either (1) asserted or (2) not. If (1) [it were asserted], the [following] reason would not be ascertained: Regarding the subject, the mind at the point of death of an ordinary being, it connects with a later [continuum of a] similar type, because it is a knower.

The latter (2) [possibility of your system, *not* asserting the mind of the last moment of an Arhat] would not be reasonable, because it would contradict what is clearly explained in the ***Pramanaviniscaya***.

An opponent argues that with regard to the last moment of an Arhat, there are two possibilities: either (1) our own system accepts the existence of the mind in the continuum of the last moment of an Arhat with remainder or (2) it does not.

If (1) our own system asserted the existence of the last moment of an Arhat with remainder, the opponent contends that according to our own system, the following would not be a correct syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the consciousness in the continuum of an ordinary person at the point of death, it connects with a later continuum of a similar type, because it is a knower.*

It would not be a correct syllogism because the syllogism's reason would not be ascertained, *i.e.*, there would be no pervasion. The syllogism would not have a pervasion, for *whatever is a knower would not necessarily connect with a later continuum of a similar type*. This is because if the last moment of an Arhat did exist, the consciousness in the Arhat's continuum would be a knower, but it would not connect with a later consciousness that was its substantial result.

However, the opponent argues, it would also not be correct to say that (2) our own system does *not* accept the existence of the mind of the last moment of an Arhat with remainder, for that contradicts the explanation in Dharmakirti's ***Pramanaviniscaya***.

[Response:] There is no fault. In our own system it is not the case that we do not assert the last [moment of the] mind of an Arhat. [According to] Acharya Devendrabuddhi and Ravigupta, if the Buddhist texts are *pramana*, one would need to assert that the death-mind of an ordinary being connects with a later [continuum] of a similar type. If those texts are not *pramana*, then the mind of the last [moment of an] Arhat would also not be established. Thus, it would not be suitable as example.

Since our own system (following the philosophical tenets of the Sautrantika School) maintains that the mental consciousness of an Arhat with remainder is severed after the Arhat's death, our own system asserts the existence of the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat. However, there is no fault with regard to the syllogism cited above (*Regarding the subject, the consciousness in the continuum of an ordinary person at the point of death, it connects with a later continuum of a similar type, because it is a knower*), for our own system accepts that since it does not have a pervasion it is not a correct syllogism. This is because *whatever is a knower does not necessarily connect with a later continuum of a similar type*.

Therefore, our own system cites the reason, "because it is a knower that possesses attachment" instead of, "because it is a knower" as part of the syllogism establishing the existence of future lives.



Based on the explanations Devendrabodhi and Ravigupta<sup>116</sup> provide in their commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika*, if one were to accept that the Buddha's teachings – in particular his teachings on past and future lives – are *pramana* or reliable, one would have to concede that whatever is the death-mind of an ordinary being (*i.e.*, a being possessing attachment) necessarily connects with the future continuum of that mind. This is because the Buddha teaches that the following is a correct syllogism establishing the existence of future lives:

*Regarding the subject, the conceptual mental awareness of an ordinary being at the point of death, it connects with a knower that is its result, because it possesses attachment.*

However, if one were to assert that the Buddha's teachings are not reliable, there would be no reason to maintain that there is liberation from the three types of suffering or that Arhats exist and so does the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat. This in turn would mean that the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat could not serve as the example that is part of a correct syllogism and complies with the syllogism's reason and predicate.

Please note that the term *pramana* in the context of Gyaltsab saying, "if the Buddhist texts were *pramana*" means reliable, credible, authentic, etc.

Further, it is not the case that the mind of the last [moment of an] Arhat is not asserted in our own system. This is because when the *Pramanaviniscaya* posits the definition of a *non-thing* as 'that which does not perform a function' and [someone] states that the mind of the last [moment of an] Arhat is not ascertained, [our own system] says that since [the mind of the last moment of an Arhat] does not serve as the substantial cause of another moment deemed to be [the mind of] a sentient being it is called "last [moment]". It is not the case that [the last moment of the mind of an Arhat] does not [generate] even the slightest result, because it is explained that it contributes to an omniscient sublime wisdom, and so forth. It is clear that since the [mind of the] last moment of an Arhat does not serve as a substantial cause of another moment deemed to be [the mind of] a sentient being, [the proponents of the Sautrantika] assert that [such an Arhat] does not connect with a later [continuum of a] similar type.

Now Gyaltsab Je presents some scriptural quotes which show that our own system accepts the existence of the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat. The first one is from Dharmakirti's *Pramanaviniscaya*:

In the *Pramanaviniscaya*, a *non-thing* is defined as 'that which does not perform a function'<sup>117</sup>. An opponent argues that the definition is not correct because a phenomenon that does not perform a function is not necessarily a non-thing.

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<sup>116</sup> Acharya Devendrabodhi (Tib: *slob dpon lha dbang blo*) and Ravigupta (Tib: *nyi ma sbas pa*) are Indian masters who composed commentaries on the *Pramanavarttika*. Dharmakirti wrote an auto-commentary on the first chapter of his *Pramanavarttika*, and permitted Devendrabodhi, one of his main disciples, to compose a commentary – the *Pramanavarttikapanjika* – on the *Pramanavarttika*. However, as mentioned above, unsatisfied with the first two drafts, Dharmakirti destroyed them and only accepted the third draft – while criticizing it for not conveying the text's deeper meaning. Later on, Prajnakaragupta (Tib: *shes rab 'byung gnas sbas pa* or *rgyan mkhan po*) composed the *Pramanavarttikalamkara*. An extensive commentary on Devendrabodhi's *Pramanavarttikapanjika* – the *Pramanavarttikavrtti* – was written by Dharmakirti's disciple Sakyabodhi (Tib: *sha 'kya blo*) who was also a disciple of Devendrabodhi. Commentaries on Prajnakaragupta's *Pramanavarttikalamkara* were composed by Ravigupta and Yamari – the *Pramanavarttikavrtti* and *Pramanavarttikalamkaratika* respectively.

<sup>117</sup> Please note that the two, *a thing* and *impermanent*, are synonymous. The definition of impermanent is 'that which is momentary', while the definition of a thing is 'that which performs a function'. To be momentary means to change moment by moment, while to perform a function refers to generating a result. Therefore, an impermanent phenomenon, such as a table, is both 'momentary' and 'that which performs a function' because it changes moment by moment and performs the function of generating a result, *e.g.*, a later moment of the table. The opposite of a thing – *i.e.*, a non-thing – is a phenomenon which does not perform a function. Examples of a non-thing are a permanent phenomenon such as selflessness or a non-existent such as the horns of a rabbit. They do not perform a function because they do not generate any effects.

The example he cites for something that is a thing (*i.e.*, impermanent) but does not perform a function is the mental consciousness of the last moment of an Arhat.

According to the opponent, such a mental consciousness does not perform a function, for it does not generate a result. It does not generate a result because its continuum ceases in the next moment.

However, since the last moment in the continuum of an Arhat is impermanent it is not a non-thing but a thing.

In the *Pramanaviniscaya*, our own system responds to the opponent's argument by contending that the last moment of the *mental consciousness* in the continuum of an Arhat performs a function. Although it does not generate a substantial result – a later moment of the mental consciousness of an Arhat (or as Gyaltsab Je puts it, “[the mind of] another moment deemed a sentient being”) – it nonetheless generates a result. The last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat generates a result because it serves as the cooperative condition of, for instance, an omniscient mind that is the result of meditating on the impermanence of the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat<sup>118</sup>.

Then Gyaltsab Je cites Acharya Prajnakaragupta and Ravigupta:

Acharya Prajnakaragupta explains, “My tenet system indicates that it is contradictory only for the mind of the last [moment of] an Arhat to connect [with a later continuum]; it is not [contradictory] for all death-minds.”

Acharya Prajnakaragupta says that ordinarily, a death-mind (*i.e.* the last moment of consciousness associated with a particular lifetime) continues by transforming into a future continuum of consciousness associated with a future life. The only exception is the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat.

Please note that in general, the Buddhist tenet schools that accept three final vehicles are the Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, and Chittamatra Following Scripture. As explained below, some scholars hold that a small section of the Chittamatra Following Reasoning also accept three final vehicles<sup>119</sup>.

According to the Vaibhashika and Sautrantika, the mental continuums of both Arhats and Buddhas are severed after death. Yet the followers of the Chittamatra who accept three final vehicles contend that only an Arhat's mental continuum is severed, and a Buddha's mental consciousness continues even after his Parinirvana, *i.e.*, his passing away.

According to some scholars, Acharya Prajnakaragupta's statement sets forth the view of the Sautrantika system, the proponents of which assert that at the time of death only the mental consciousness of an Arhat does not continue; the mental awareness of beings who have not eliminated afflictions connects with a later continuum.

Since a Buddha is also an Arhat (because he has eliminated afflictions) his mental continuum is severed after death. Therefore, a Buddha is included in the statement, “it is contradictory only for the mind of the last [moment of] an Arhat to connect

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<sup>118</sup> Please note: since meditation on the impermanence of the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat is one of the causes of Buddhahood, the object of such a meditation (the impermanence of the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat) is also a cause of such an enlightened state. Similarly, whatever is the result of the *impermanence* of the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat is also the result of the last moment of that consciousness itself. This is because the *impermanence* of the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat is an integral characteristic of the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat, and it is generated and disintegrates simultaneously with the Arhat.

<sup>119</sup> In general, the common assertion among scholars is that the proponents of the Cittamatra School Following Reasoning accept only one final vehicle.

[with a later continuum]” as the last moment of his consciousness does not connect with a subsequent awareness.

Other scholars contend that Ravigupta’s statement presents the Chittamattra School Following Scripture. According to this tenet system, only the consciousness of an *Arhat Exclusively Aiming for Peace* does not continue. This type of Arhat is explained below.

Ravigupta [says], “The explanation that the continuums of matter and knowers are extinguished like a butter-lamp flame is [given] from a point of view that asserts external objects. If one does not assert those [external objects], [one accepts that] only a mind that is purified of afflictions connects with a later [continuum of a] similar type.”

There are different ways of interpreting this statement. According to some scholars, Ravigupta here sets forth the view of a small section of Cittamatrins Following Reasoning who accept three final vehicles:

Among the Buddhist schools which do not accept that all sentient beings will become enlightened, Ravigupta differentiates between (a) those which assert that sense objects are external to consciousness and (b) those which assert they are not:

According to (a) the Vaibashika and Sautrantika (which assert external sense objects), when an Arhat dies, his mental and physical continuums are extinguished like the flame of a butter-lamp. This view is reflected by the first part of Ravigupta’s statement (“The explanation that the continuums of matter and knowers are extinguished like a butter-lamp flame is from the point of view of asserting external objects.”). The followers of the Vaibashika and Sautrantika School contend that at the time of death, an Arhat’s mental continuum ceases without connecting to a later continuum. Yet his physical continuum does not literally end since the atoms that make up the Arhat’s body continue to exist in different forms. Therefore, an Arhat’s physical continuum is severed or extinguished in the sense that it ceases to serve as the Arhat’s body.

According to (b) Cittamatrins who accept three final vehicles (*i.e.*, all Cittamatrins Following Scripture and some Cittamatrins Following Reasoning) there are two types of Arhats:

- (1) *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* (Tib: *zhi ba bgrod pa gcig bu ba’i dgra bcom*) and
- (2) *Thoroughly Transforming Arhats* (Tib: *yongs su gyur ba po’i dgra bcom*)<sup>120</sup>

In the *Sutra Unravelling the Thought*, the Buddha says that *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* have eliminated afflictive obstructions but do not have the potential to become fully enlightened Buddhas as they lack strong compassion and could not endure the hardship of having to work for the welfare of all sentient beings.

*Thoroughly Transforming Arhats* on the other hand, do have the potential to attain enlightenment; they are spurred on by the Buddhas to not be satisfied with having eliminated afflictive obstructions but to strive instead to eliminate cognitive obstructions.

Through the power of samadhi, these Arhats expand the lifespan of their body in order not to die and thus not to enter Nirvana without remainder, for if they did, their mental continuum would be severed. Yet they make others believe that they have entered Nirvana without remainder<sup>121</sup>, and conceal their physical body in a remote place<sup>122</sup>, take on another body, and enter the Mahayana path.

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<sup>120</sup> Chittamatrins Following Reasoning who accept only one final vehicle do not accept these two types of Arhats.

<sup>121</sup> Nirvana without remainder refers to the cessation of afflictive obstructions in the continuum of an Arhat without remainder, *i.e.*, an Arhat who no longer has a body that is the result of contaminated karma and afflictions.

Therefore, a *Thoroughly Transforming Arhat's* mental consciousness connects with a later continuum of a similar type and eventually transforms into the omniscient mind of a Buddha.

Please note that although Chittamatrins Following Scripture and those Chittamatrins Following Reasoning who accept three final vehicles assert that *Thoroughly Transforming Arhats* attain Buddhahood, they do not propound one final vehicle because they assert *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace*, who do not enter the Mahayana and become enlightened.

However, the view of the Chittamatrins Following Reasoning who accept three final vehicles differs from that of the Chittamatrins Following Scripture: according to the Chittamatrins Following Scripture, the mental continuum of *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* does not continue but is severed after their death.

According to the Chittamatrins Following Reasoning who accept three final vehicles, when *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* die, their mental continuum separates from the body, they attain Nirvana without remainder, and their mental consciousness continues by transforming into a subsequent continuum of mental consciousness. Free of a samsaric body, these Arhats have become Arhats without remainder. Yet since they do not have the potential to become Buddhas they will not enter the Mahayana but will always remain in the state of Arhats without remainder.

This latter view is reflected by the second part of Ravigupta's statement ("If one does not assert those [external objects], [one accepts that] only a mind that is purified of afflictions connects with a later [continuum of a] similar type"). Ravigupta says that when *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* attain Nirvana without remainder their mental consciousness, which is free from afflictive obstructions, continues by connecting with a subsequent continuum of awareness,

Here, the word "only" ("...only a mind that is purified of afflictions connects...") denotes that the mental consciousness alone – not the body – continues as the Arhat's aggregate.

This explanation of Ravigupta's statement is supported by Khedrup Je when he says in his ***Great Commentary on the Pramanavarttika, Ocean of Reasoning***:

*Acharya Ravigupta elucidates, "Despite attaining Nirvana without remainder, [the physical] aggregate, there is a mind that is thoroughly purified – the continuum of the afflictions having been severed. Attaining Nirvana that is like the extinguishing of the flame of a butter-lamp is from the viewpoint of external [existence], not [from the viewpoint] of the ultimate (i.e., the Chittamatra)."*

Gyaltsab Je says in his ***Great commentary on*** (Dharmakirti's) ***Pramanaviniscaya*** (Tib: *rnam nges tik chen*):

*In answer to this, Ravigupta responds that the explanation regarding the continuums of matter and knower being severed at the time of [Nirvana] without remainder, the [physical] aggregate, is given from the point of view of the system of the Shravaka Sautrantika which does not assert external objects. According to our own Yogachara system, it is accepted that even at that time (i.e., at the time of Nirvana without remainder) the continuum of a similar type as the wisdom realizing selflessness is not severed.*

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<sup>122</sup> There are different assertions as to why *Thoroughly Transforming Arhats* make others believe that they have attained Nirvana without remainder and hide their bodies. Some scholars (e.g. Geshe Dawa Tsering who is a great contemporary scholar from Drepung Loseling Monastery) say that they do so in order to act – as Buddhas and Bodhisattvas do – in conformity with "the ways of the world". Since it is normal for humans to die within a lifespan of about a hundred years, *Thoroughly Transforming Arhats* secretly extend their lifespan but make others believe that they have died and thus attained Nirvana without remainder.

Arhats, Bodhisattvas, and Buddhas adjust many of their actions to those of ordinary sentient beings in order to benefit those beings. If they didn't, it would be much harder for ordinary beings to relate to them and follow their instructions.

Therefore, followers of the Chittamatra who assert three final vehicles do not necessarily assert that the consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat with remainder is severed.

Gyaltsab Je says in his **Commentary on** (Maitreya's) **Uttaratantra** (Tib: *rgyus bla tik chen*):

*Some Yogacharins who assert three final vehicles also maintain that at the time of the Shravaka Nirvana without remainder [the continuum] of a similar type as the sublime wisdom realizing selflessness is not severed.*

Some may argue that Ravigupta's quote presents the Chittamatra School Following Scripture and that there is a small section of this tenet system that does not assert that the mental continuum of an Arhat ends at the time of attaining Nirvana without remainder.

However, this is not reasonable because the Chittamatra School Following Scripture is characterized by the view that the continuum of the mental consciousness of an Arhat without remainder is extinguished, because that is one of this tenet school's root assertions.

Lama Tsongkhapa says in the **Golden Rosary**:

*It is their root tenet that after an Arhat has died, his knower does not connect with a later continuum.*

Also, Panchen Sonam Drakpa says in his commentary on Maitreya's **Abhisamayalamkara**, the **General Meaning**:

*Most Chittamatrins Following Reasoning maintain the establishment of one final vehicle.*

The word "most" in the latter quote implies that although the majority of Chittamatrins Following Reasoning propound one final vehicle, some accept three final vehicles.

In summary, the view of the different tenet schools with regard to the number of final vehicles is as follows:

The followers of the Vaibashika and Sautrantika hold that it is extremely rare for someone to become a Buddha and that most Buddhist practitioners become self-liberated. The select few who attain Buddhahood do not become self-liberated first, for their mental continuum would be severed and they would be unable to proceed to Buddhahood. Yet a Buddha's mental consciousness also ends after he passes away. Practitioners who attain self-liberation first become Arhats with remainder; when they die they become Arhats without remainder and their mental continuum ends.

According to the followers of the Chittamatra Following Scripture, some sentient beings have the potential to become Buddhas and some do not. Those who do have the potential either enter the Mahayana from the outset or else after they have entered the Hinayana and become self-liberated. Practitioners who enter the Hinayana and attain self-liberation can be divided into two: (a) *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* and (b) *Thoroughly Transforming Arhats*. *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* are Arhats with remainder who lack the potential to attain Buddhahood. When they die and become Arhats without remainder, their mental continuum is severed. *Thoroughly Transforming Arhats* are able to attain enlightenment. They bless their body to have a long life, enact their own death, hide their body (that is a result of contaminated karma and afflictions), and take on a new body with which they enter the Mahayana and reach the state of a Buddha.

According to this tenet system, although the mental continuum of an Arhat who has passed away (and attained Nirvana without remainder) goes out of existence, a Buddha's mental consciousness continues even after he passes away. As Asanga says in one of his *Five Treatises on the Bhumis* (Tib: *sa sde lnga*), in the **Yogacharabhumi**

**Vastusamgraha** (Tib: *rnal 'byor spyod pa'i sa las gzhi bsdu ba*, *Compendium of Topics*) after his passing away, a Buddha continues to manifest emanations in order to lead sentient beings to liberation or enlightenment.

The followers of those Chittamatrins Following Reasoning who accept three final vehicles make almost the same assertions as the Chittamatrins Following Scripture. However, they differ in that they do not accept that the mental continuum of a living being can be severed. Therefore, they contend that the mental consciousness of *Arhats Exclusively Aiming for Peace* continues even after they attain Nirvana without remainder. Yet these Arhats are unable to enter the Mahayana and thus always remain Arhats without remainder.

A majority of the followers of the Chittamatra Following Reasoning and the followers of the Madhyamika Schools accept only one final vehicle, for they maintain that all sentient beings will eventually attain the state of a Buddha. Practitioners enter the Mahayana either from the outset or after entering the Hinayana and becoming self-liberated. Some Hinayana practitioners enter the Mahayana while they are Arhats with remainder, while others enter it after attaining Nirvana without remainder.

All those [quotes reflect] the systems that assert three final vehicles. If one proclaims that these passages definitely indicate that there is one final vehicle, it is an expression of lacking understanding of the presentation of tenet systems.

The quotes Gyaltsab Je cites above from the *Pramanaviniscaya* by Acharya Prajnakaragupta, etc., present different Buddhist tenet systems that accept three final vehicles. Although Ravigupta's quote in particular can be misunderstood to set forth one final vehicle when he says that a mind that is free of the afflictions connects with a continuum of a similar type, it is essential to understand that these quotes are all representative of tenet schools that do not accept that all sentient beings will attain Buddhahood.

The quotes also indicate that our own system – the Sautrantika – accepts three final vehicles and thus the existence of the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat with remainder.

[Someone:] Well, then, how can one overcome [the issue] of the reason establishing future lives being not ascertained?

Having demonstrated that our own system accepts the existence of the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat, someone asks about a correct reason establishing future lives that does not lack a pervasion:

An opponent argued before (p. 212) that either (1) our own system accepts the existence of the mind in the continuum of the last moment of an Arhat with remainder or (2) it does not.

Since our own system asserts the existence of such a last moment, the following syllogism establishing future lives is flawed: *Regarding the subject, the consciousness in the continuum of an ordinary person at the point of death, it connects with a later continuum of a similar type, because it is a knower.*

The syllogism's reason is not ascertained as there is no pervasion. *Whatever is a knower does not necessarily connect with a later continuum of a similar type* since the last moment of consciousness in an Arhat's continuum is a knower, but it does not connect with a later consciousness that is its substantial result.

Our own system agrees with the opponent that the syllogism cited above is not ascertained (*i.e.*, the reason is not pervaded by the predicate).

Here someone asks what can be done for the syllogism establishing future lives to have a pervasion? In other words, what is a correct reason that establishes the existence of future lives?

[Response:] As it says in the ***Tattvasamgrahapanjika*** by Archaya Kamalashila, “[This states] a nature reason: ‘Any mind possessing attachment is necessarily capable of generating another mind that is to be adopted well and that is its substantial result. For instance, like the mind of a former occasion possessing attachment. The mind of an ordinary being at the point of death also possesses attachment’.”

In response, our own system contends (as mentioned above) that the reason that is part of the correct syllogism establishing the existence of future lives should be, *because it is a knower possessing attachment*.

The source for that is the ***Tattvasamgrahapanjika***<sup>123</sup> in which Kamalashila presents a proof statement (*Whatever is a mind possessing attachment is necessarily able to generate a mind that is its substantial result. For instance, like a previous mind possessing attachment. The mind of an ordinary being also possesses attachment*).

The proof statement indicates a correct syllogism establishing the existence of future lives: *Regarding the subject, the mind of an ordinary being, it is able to generate a mind that is its substantial result, because it is a mind possessing attachment. For instance, like a previous mind possessing attachment.*

The syllogism has a pervasion because *whatever is a mind possessing attachment is necessarily able to generate a mind that is its substantial result*. Hence there is no mental consciousness in the continuum of someone who has attachment that does not transform into a subsequent mental consciousness that is its substantial result.

The last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat is not able to generate a mind that is the substantial result of that consciousness, nor is it a mind possessing attachment. It is not a mind possessing attachment because it is a consciousness in the continuum of someone who has eliminated all afflictions.

Of the three types of syllogism, the syllogism is a *nature syllogism*, i.e., the syllogism’s reason is a *nature reason*<sup>124</sup>.

Although our own system cited that syllogism in a previous outline (**SETTING FORTH THE REASONS**) as part of our own system’s reasoning establishing the existence of past and future lives, here it is mentioned again in the context of providing a source text for the syllogism.

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<sup>123</sup> Kamalashila’s *Tattvasamgrahapanjika* (Tib: *de kho na nyud bsdud pa’i dka’ ‘grel*, *Commentary on the Compendium of Principles*) is a commentary on Shantarakshita’s *Tattvasamgrahakarika* (Tib. *de kho na nyid bsdud pa tshig le’ur byas pa*, *Compendium of Principles*) which is a Pramana treatise providing a presentation on tenet systems.

<sup>124</sup> As mentioned above in note 114, a correct syllogism can be categorized into (1) result syllogism, (2) nature syllogism, and (3) non-observation syllogism. This is the same as saying that a correct syllogism’s reason can be categorized into: (1) result reason, (2) nature reason, and (3) non-observation reason.

The syllogism indicated by Kamalashila is a nature syllogism because (a) the syllogism’s predicate is positive and (b) the syllogism’s predicate and reason are of one nature. The syllogism’s predicate, ‘*able to generate a mind that is its substantial result*’ is (a) a positive phenomenon, because when ‘*able to generate a mind that is its substantial result*’ appears to consciousness it appears in an affirmative manner without negating anything.

Also, (b) the syllogism’s predicate and reason are of one nature since ‘*able to generate a mind that is its substantial result*’ (the predicate) is a characteristic of ‘*a mind possessing attachment*’ (the reason). In other words, one of the attributes or characteristics of a mind that possesses attachment is the ability to give rise to or transform into its later continuum, a subsequent mind that is its substantial result.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why do Lokayatas not accept the existence of Arhats?
2. Why is the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat rebutted as an example that is part of the syllogism cited by the Lokayatas?
3. If Buddhist texts were not *pramana*, i.e., credible or reliable, why would the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat not exist?
4. How does our own system respond when an opponent argues: ‘that which performs a function’ is not the definition of a thing, because the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat is a thing but does not satisfy that definition?
5. What does Ravigupta say with regard to the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat according to the Sautrantika and some followers of the Chittamatra Following Reasoning?
6. How can one overcome the wrong view that the syllogism establishing future lives is not ascertained, i.e., that it does not have a pervasion?

## REFUTING THE CONCEPTION THAT THERE IS PRAMANA [ESTABLISHING THE EXAMPLE]

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The unfeasibility of [citing] scripture as an establishing agent
- (2) The unfeasibility of [citing] reasoning as an establishing agent

## THE UNFEASIBILITY OF [CITING] SCRIPTURE AS AN ESTABLISHING AGENT

In this outline, our system refutes an opponent citing Buddhist scripture as a reason why the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat is an appropriate example.

[Someone:] A faultless knower at the point of death is established [as an appropriate example] since it is explained in your scriptures.

An opponent argues that the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat can serve as the example that is part of the syllogism cited by the Lokayatas, because such a consciousness is set forth in the Buddhist scriptures.

The opponent describes the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat as “a faultless knower at the point of death” since (according to our system) it is a consciousness that is free of afflictive obstructions and arises at the time of the Arhat’s death.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*What, [are you] a follower of a tenet system  
That has topics not established by pramana?*

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[Response:] What, are you a **follower of** the Buddhist **tenet system**? It follows that it is not fitting [to cite Buddhist scriptures] as an establishing agent [to prove the appropriateness of the example] since [according to you] the [Buddhist] tenet system **has topics** that are **not established by pramana** because you assert that the topics of the Buddhist scriptures are to be refuted.

Our own system contends that it is not reasonable for the opponent – who is a follower of the Lokayata tenets – to cite Buddhist scriptures to establish his own position, i.e., that



the example is appropriate. This is because the opponent disputes Buddhist tenets such as past and future lives, the law of karma, liberation, and so forth.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What does the opponent mean when he speaks of a “faultless knower”?
2. In this outline, what is the opponent’s reason for saying that the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat can serve as the example that is part of the syllogism cited by the Lokayatas?
3. What is our own system’s response to the opponent?

## THE UNFEASIBILITY OF [CITING] REASONING AS AN ESTABLISHING AGENT

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refuting the reason
- (2) Eliminating objections
- (3) Identifying a result’s special indispensable cause

## REFUTING THE REASON

Under this heading, an opponent attempts to show that ‘the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat’ is an appropriate example by presenting a syllogism establishing the non-existence of future lives and citing that last moment of consciousness as the syllogism’s subject. In response, our own system demonstrates that the syllogism is logically flawed.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If [someone says] because the cause is lacking.*

[Someone:] Regarding the subject, the mind of an Arhat at the point of death, it does not connect with [a subsequent continuum of] a similar type, **because** the [subsequent continuum’s] **cause** – inhalation, exhalation, and the sense powers, etc. – **is lacking**.

Here, an opponent cites the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat, it does not connect with a subsequent continuum of a similar type because the subsequent continuum’s cause, such as inhalation, exhalation, the sense powers, and so forth is lacking.*

The cause here refers to the *indispensable* cause. The opponent argues that the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat does not continue by way of connecting with or becoming a subsequent consciousness, because that subsequent consciousness lacks its indispensable cause, respiration, the five sense powers, and so forth.

This means that according to the opponent, the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat does not connect with a later moment of consciousness because a later moment of consciousness cannot arise. It cannot arise since there are no sense powers, etc. that serve as the indispensable cause of the later moment of consciousness and thus give rise to that mind.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Why don’t you state that very [reason] here?*

[Response:] **Why don't you state that very** [reason] **here** as an establishing agent to establish that the mind of an ordinary being at the point of death does not connect [with a subsequent continuum of a similar type]? It follows that it is reasonable to state that [reason] because you want to state either this or the previous reason; yet the previous [reason] is not ascertained.

In response, our own system questions the opponent's choice of a subject for the syllogism, suggesting that the opponent should cite the same reason (*because the subsequent continuum's cause, such as respiration, the sense powers, and so forth is lacking*) and the same predicate (*it does not connect with a subsequent continuum of a similar type*). However, he should replace his subject (*the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat*) with: '*the last moment of consciousness of an ordinary being*' since the opponent does not assert the existence of Arhats, and essentially is seeking to prove that ordinary living beings are not reborn.

Therefore, our own system contends that it would make more sense if the opponent cited the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the last moment of consciousness of an ordinary being at the time of death, it does not connect with a subsequent continuum of a similar type, because the subsequent continuum's cause, such as respiration, the sense powers, etc. is lacking.*

This would make more sense because thus far the opponent has cited two reasons in order to establish the non-existence of future lives – (1) '*because it is a death-mind*' and (2) '*because the subsequent continuum's cause, such as respiration, the sense powers, etc. is lacking*' – but of the two, the first has previously been shown to be flawed since it is not ascertained, i.e., it is not pervaded by the predicate<sup>125</sup>.

If you accept [that it is reasonable to state the second reason], [our own system] shows that [the reason] is not established:

Nor is the second reason able to establish the non-existence of future lives. This is because the second reason as part of the syllogism cited above (*Regarding the subject, the last moment of consciousness of an ordinary being at the time of death, it does not connect with a subsequent continuum of a similar type, because the subsequent continuum's cause, such as respiration, the sense powers, etc. is lacking*) is not established<sup>126</sup>. It is not established since respiration, the sense powers etc. are not the indispensable cause of the subsequent consciousness of an ordinary being's death mind. The reason is as follows:

If the sense powers such as the eye, etc. were the [special] indispensable cause of the conceptual mental awareness they would have to be either the substantial cause or the [special] empowering condition. [That they are] the former will be refuted below.

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<sup>125</sup> The opponent's first reason is not pervaded by the syllogism's predicate because *whatever is a death-mind does not necessarily not connect with a later continuum of a similar type*.

<sup>126</sup> Please note that there is a difference between a syllogism's reason being (a) not ascertained and (b) not established. When a reason is not ascertained it is not pervaded by the predicate. An example is: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is permanent, because it exists*. The syllogism's reason is not ascertained because *whatever exists is not necessarily permanent*.

An example of a reason that is not established is: *Regarding the subject, sound, it is permanent because it is a phenomenon that is not momentary*. The reason is not established since the subject, sound is not a phenomenon that is not momentary; sound is a phenomenon that *is* momentary, for it changes moment by moment.

As mentioned before, a phenomenon's indispensable cause is either the phenomenon's substantial cause or its special cooperative condition, *i.e.*, its special empowering condition<sup>127</sup>.

Therefore, if, as the opponent claims, the sense powers were the indispensable cause of the subsequent consciousness of an ordinary being's death mind, they would be either the substantial cause or the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness. Yet, the sense powers are not the substantial cause of the conceptual mental consciousness since this is refuted below.

[Someone:] [The sense powers] are the [special] empowering condition [of the conceptual mental awareness].

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Because it would apprehend [form] as the [eye] awareness [does]  
Mental consciousness is not [generated] by [a body] along with the sense powers.*

[Response:] It follows that the conceptual **mental consciousness is not** generated **by** its [special] empowering condition – a body **along with the sense powers – because** if such were the case, [the conceptual mental consciousness] **would apprehend** form **as** clearly as the **eye awareness** apprehends form.

If someone says that the sense powers are the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness, our own system responds by saying that the body along with the sense powers does not act as the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness because if it did, there would be only two possibilities: either (1) *one* of the sense powers would be the special empowering condition of the mental consciousness or (2) *all* five sense powers would serve as such an empowering condition.

(1) In the first case, if, for instance, the eye sense power were the indispensable cause of the conceptual mental consciousness, the following absurdity would occur: The conceptual mental consciousness would perceive a physical phenomenon, such as a table, as clearly as the eye consciousness perceives a table. The reason is as follows:

Consciousnesses are categorized into (a) sense consciousnesses and (b) mental consciousnesses. Sense consciousnesses are subdivided into eye consciousnesses, ear consciousnesses, nose consciousnesses, tongue consciousnesses, and body consciousnesses, while mental consciousnesses can be subdivided into conceptual and non-conceptual mental consciousnesses. Most mental consciousnesses in the continuum of an ordinary being are conceptual.

(a) Sense consciousnesses are necessarily non-conceptual, *i.e.*, they perceive their objects directly or “nakedly”, not using the medium of a generic image. However, as mentioned before, they depend on three conditions without which they cannot arise: (i) the observed object condition, (ii) the uncommon empowering condition, and (iii) the immediately preceding condition.

(i) The observed object condition refers to the sense objects. For the eye consciousness, shape and color are the observed object condition, for the ear consciousness it is sound, for the nose consciousness smell, and so forth. In the case of an eye consciousness apprehending a table, the table is the observed object condition of that eye consciousness; the table is the main object and a cause of the eye consciousness because it is in dependence on the table that the eye consciousness takes on the aspect of the table, *i.e.*, that the table appears to the eye consciousness.

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<sup>127</sup> According to some scholars (e.g., Geshe Dawa Tsering), in general, a cause and an empowering condition are synonymous. However, here in the context of setting forth past and future lives, an empowering condition refers to a cooperative condition. Therefore, in this context a special cooperative condition and a special empowering condition are synonymous.

(ii) The uncommon empowering condition refers to the sense powers. The eye sense power is the uncommon empowering condition of the eye consciousness, the ear sense power of the ear consciousness, and so forth. Whatever appears to the sense powers also appears to their respective sense consciousnesses, with the sense powers enabling the sense consciousnesses to clearly perceive their individual sense objects.

(iii) The immediately preceding condition is the moment of awareness that immediately precedes the sense consciousness; it refers to the consciousness that manifests a moment before the sense consciousness manifests. For instance, the eye consciousness apprehending a table is preceded by an awareness (a sense or mental consciousness) which serves as the cause of the eye consciousness since it is responsible for the eye consciousness arising as a luminous and knowing mind<sup>128</sup>. If the eye consciousness were not preceded by a former moment of awareness, it would not be able to manifest as an experiencing and aware entity able to cognize its object.

Among the three conditions, the uncommon empowering condition is necessarily a sense consciousness' special empowering condition and thus its indispensable cause. In the case of the eye consciousness apprehending a table, the eye sense power that gives rise to that eye consciousness is the special empowering condition of the eye consciousness because it is its special cooperative condition. It empowers the eye consciousness to freshly and vividly perceive its object, the table.

(b) Mental consciousnesses, in the case of ordinary beings, are mostly conceptual and therefore unable to perceive their objects as clearly as sense consciousnesses do.

Conceptual mental consciousnesses apprehend their objects *indirectly* by way of a generic image (also referred to as "meaning generality", Tib: *don spyi*). When a conceptual consciousness apprehends a table, for instance, it gets at the table by way of the appearance of a generic image of the table.

The generic image of the table is only a representation of the table, not the table itself; it serves as an intermediary object that allows the conceptual consciousness to get at the table. The generic image is a subjective representation of the table in that it encompasses what we *mean* when we say "table". Our representation of the table is not directly connected to reality, for it is constructed by labels and concepts. On the basis of the parts of the table, its surface and the legs, assembled in a specific way and able to perform a specific function, we construct a mental concept of the table that does not exist from the side of the table itself but is part of our conceptual label *table*.

This constructed representation or generic image of the table enables the conceptual awareness to apprehend the table. Without the appearance of the generic image of the table, the conceptual consciousness would not be able to think about the table, since it does not function like a sense consciousness, to which the actual table nakedly appears<sup>129</sup>.

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<sup>128</sup> Consciousness is synonymous with mind, awareness, and knower. The definition of consciousness is: that which is luminous and knowing. 'Luminous' describes the nature of the mind. Consciousness is luminous because it is non-physical and illuminates its object since, like a mirror, anything can appear to it. The word 'knowing' describes the function of the mind, for it describes the potential of consciousness to know or cognize its objects.

<sup>129</sup> Although sense consciousnesses have the advantage of being able to freshly and nakedly experience their objects, they are limited in that they are not always present; they lie dormant while we are sleeping or faint, and they absorb into subtler awarenesses at the time of death. They can only experience sense objects, such as shape, color, sound, etc., that are in relatively close proximity and exist in the presence, *i.e.*, a moment before the sense consciousness. (present ?)

Also, sense consciousnesses are able to incontrovertibly know their objects but they are not able to analyze, interpret, classify, judge, or label these objects; they merely realize them directly and provide us with the raw data. It is the mental consciousness that is able to analyze objects, reflect on them and so forth.

The mental consciousness can apprehend any phenomenon of the past, present, and future; it can cognize phenomena other than the five sense objects (shape, color, sound, etc.) such as subtle impermanence, the mind, permanent phenomena, etc. Hence the mental consciousness does not depend on an observed object condition and a physical empowering condition, but only on an immediately preceding condition. Further, it is not only present while we are awake but also while we are dreaming or at the time of death.

Returning to the logical absurdity, in response to someone suggesting that the sense powers are the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness, our own system sets forth the following:

If the eye sense power were the indispensable cause of the conceptual mental consciousness, the conceptual mental consciousness apprehending a visual object such as a table would apprehend the table as clearly and nakedly as an eye consciousness apprehending a table, because both would be the result of their special empowering condition, the eye sense power.

However, this would contradict the fact that conceptual consciousnesses do not apprehend their objects as vividly as sense consciousnesses, since they have to rely on generic images for the perception of their objects.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since [the five sense powers] have distinct capacities to generate consciousnesses, [The conceptual mental consciousness] is also not [generated] by all.*

[The conceptual mental consciousness] **also** does not have to be definitely **generated by** the [special] empowering condition, the collection of **all** the sense powers, **since** as [special] empowering conditions the sense powers **have distinct capacities to generate** [different types of] **consciousnesses** apprehending their respective objects.

It is also not plausible to assert that (2) the collection of *all* five sense powers act as the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness, for the five sense powers differ from the point of view of the type of consciousness to which they give rise. The eye sense power serves as the special empowering condition of the eye consciousness but not of the ear, nose, tongue, or body consciousness; the ear sense power serves as the special empowering condition of the ear consciousness, not of the other sense consciousnesses, and so forth. Since the five sense powers differ with respect to their capacity to induce particular types of consciousness, it is not reasonable to assume that all five of them serve as the special empowering condition of the mental consciousness.

The word “also” with regard to the previous predicate [includes the following] reason: ‘because it would follow that if one of the sense powers were not complete this [conceptual mental consciousness] would not be generated’.

Dharmakirti says above, “[*The conceptual mental consciousness*] is also not [*generated*] by all”. The word “also” implies that there is another reason that establishes the previous predicate. The previous predicate is: “[*The conceptual mental consciousness*] does not have to be definitely generated by the [special] empowering condition, the collection of all the sense powers.”

The second reason based on the previous predicate is:

The five sense powers do not serve jointly as the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness because if they did, it would follow that when a person lacks one of the sense powers, he could not have a conceptual mental consciousness.

For instance, a blind person does not have a functioning eye sense power. Therefore, if took all five sense powers to be the special empowering condition of the mental consciousness, it would absurdly follow that a blind person would not have a mental consciousness.

If the conceptual mental consciousness were to clearly apprehend all six objects, it would follow that since even a single sense power [could] generate [the conceptual mental consciousness] the remaining sense powers would be superfluous.

If someone responds to our own system's rebuttals by claiming that the conceptual mental consciousness arises from its special empowering condition, one of the five sense powers, and clearly perceives all six types of objects<sup>130</sup>, our own system argues: if that were the case, there would be no sense consciousnesses since the conceptual mental consciousness would clearly apprehend the five sense objects. Furthermore, since the conceptual mental consciousness would be generated by a single sense power as its special empowering condition, there would be no need for the remaining four sense powers.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

[*Mental awareness*] is not [generated] from another [a body that lacks sense powers] because [such a body] does not have a mind.

Mental awareness **is** also **not** generated **from another** – a dead body – as the special empowering condition, **because** [such a body] **does not have** a substantial cause, **a mind**.

Having established that a body along with the sense powers does not serve as the special empowering condition of a conceptual mental consciousness, Dharmakirti then establishes that “another”, *i.e.*, a body that *lacks* sense powers, does not serve as such a special empowering condition either.

A body that lacks sense powers refers to, as Gyaltsab Je puts it, “a dead body” or a corpse.

A corpse does not serve as the special empowering condition of a conceptual mental consciousness because a mental consciousness necessarily arises from its substantial cause, a former mental consciousness, and there is no mental consciousness linked to a corpse that can serve as such a substantial cause.

In other words, if a corpse were to serve as the special empowering condition of a mental consciousness, it would be that consciousness' special cooperative condition. As a cooperative condition it would give rise to its result by assisting that result's substantial cause. The substantial cause of a mental consciousness is a former mental consciousness. Therefore, if a corpse were the special empowering condition of a subsequent mental consciousness, the corpse would assist the mental consciousness that serves as the *substantial cause* of the subsequent mental consciousness (*i.e.*, the corpse would assist the substantial cause that exists simultaneously with the corpse). But a corpse does not exist together with a mental consciousness that it assists, because a corpse is not linked to a mental consciousness.

In brief, in order to demonstrate that the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat is an appropriate example, an opponent sets forth the following syllogism: *Regarding the subject, the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat, it does not connect with a subsequent continuum of a similar type because the subsequent continuum's indispensable cause, such as the sense powers, etc., is lacking. (If [someone says] because the cause is lacking)*

Our own system responds by asking the opponent: since you do not accept the existence of Arhats, why do you cite it as the subject of your syllogism? Why do you not instead state the same reason (*because the subsequent continuum's indispensable cause, such as the sense powers, etc. is lacking*) in order to establish that the mental consciousness of an

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<sup>130</sup> The six types of objects are the five sense objects (color and shape, sound, smell, taste, and tangible objects) and the mental sense objects. The mental sense objects are perceived by the mental consciousness. They are the five sense objects as well as objects that are not perceived by any of the sense consciousnesses, such as permanence, impermanence, selflessness, and so forth.

ordinary being at the point of death does not connect with a subsequent mental consciousness? (*Why don't you state that very [reason] here?*)

Yet even if the opponent replaced the subject, the syllogism would be logically flawed since the sense powers, etc. are not the indispensable cause of the conceptual mental consciousness. This is because they do not serve as the substantial cause, nor as the special empowering condition (or special cooperative condition) of that consciousness.

The sense powers are not the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness, because if the eye sense power, for instance, were to serve as such a special empowering condition, the conceptual consciousness would apprehend visual form as clearly as the eye consciousness. (*Because it would apprehend [form] as the [eye] awareness [does] / Mental consciousness is not [generated] by [a body] along with the sense powers.*)

Nor is it correct to assert that the five sense powers act conjointly as the special empowering condition of the conceptual mental consciousness, for each sense power has the unique capacity to give rise to its respective sense consciousness.

Furthermore, if *all* five sense powers were the cause of the mental consciousness, any being who lacked one of the sense powers would not have a mental consciousness either. (*Since [the five sense powers] have distinct capacities to generate consciousnesses, / The conceptual mental consciousness is also not [generated] by all.*)

After our own system has established that a body along with the sense powers is not the special empowering condition of a conceptual mental consciousness, our own system confirms that a body *without* sense powers, *i.e.*, a corpse, does not serve as such an empowering condition either.

A corpse cannot serve as the special empowering condition of a resultant conceptual mental consciousness because a corpse is not linked to a mental consciousness and therefore does not assist such a mental consciousness in giving rise to a resultant mental consciousness. (*[Mental awareness] is not [generated] from another [a dead body] because [such a body] does not have a mind.*)

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What syllogism does the opponent cite in order to show that the last moment of consciousness of an Arhat is an appropriate example?
2. What subject does our own system suggest the opponent should cite, instead of the subject, "the last moment of consciousness in the continuum of an Arhat"?
3. Why is the reason of the syllogism cited by the opponent not established?
4. What would be the logical absurdity if the eye sense power were the indispensable cause of the conceptual mental consciousness?
5. What would be the two logical fallacies if all five sense consciousnesses were the indispensable cause of the conceptual mental consciousness?
6. What would be the logical absurdity if the conceptual mental consciousness were to clearly perceive the five sense objects (and the mental sense objects) and could arise in dependence on one of the five sense objects?
7. Why does a body that lacks the five sense powers, *i.e.*, a corpse, not serve as the indispensable cause of a conceptual mental consciousness?

## ELIMINATING OBJECTIONS

In this outline, our own system rebuts two objections which are based on the opponents' assertion that the body is the special empowering condition (and thus the indispensable cause) of the mental consciousness.

[Someone:] Well, then, what about [the conceptual consciousness and the sense powers] abiding together?

An opponent objects to our own system's assertion by asking: if the sense powers and the mental consciousness are not related to one another in that the sense powers are the special empowering condition of the mental consciousness, how can we account for them existing together?

The opponent reasons that just as the sense powers and the sense consciousnesses co-exist in the continuum of a single living being, with the sense powers acting as the sense consciousnesses' special empowering condition, likewise the sense powers must serve as the mental consciousness' special empowering condition; otherwise there would be no reason for the sense powers and the mental consciousness to exist together.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since they were generated by one and the same cause, they abide together  
Like the sense powers [or] like form and taste.*

[Response:] It is suitable that the sense powers and the mental [consciousness] of a single assemblage – which are subsumed under ripened [effects] – abide together, because they were generated by one and the same cause, previous karma. For example, like the five sense powers or like form and taste which abide together although they are not [related as] base and based.

Please note that the mental consciousness and the sense powers of a human, for instance, belong to a single collection because they are parts of the same person. A human is referred to as a collection (Tib: *tshogs pa*), for he is a whole that is made up of different parts (such as the five aggregates)

Furthermore, an ordinary being's mental consciousness and sense powers are subsumed under ripened effects because they *are* ripened effects.

As mentioned before, a ripened effect has three characteristics: (1) it is neutral, *i.e.*, neither virtuous nor non-virtuous, (2) it is a living being's aggregate, and (3) it has been generated by its ripening cause, a contaminated virtuous or non-virtuous phenomenon.

An ordinary being's mental consciousness and body are ripened effects because in general, (1) they are neutral, (2) they are that being's aggregates, and (3) they are the result of the same ripening cause, a virtuous or non-virtuous projecting karma that was accumulated in a past life.

Therefore, in response to the opponent's objection, our own system says that since the mental consciousness and the body of a single ordinary being are the ripened result of the same projecting karma they exist together. Yet this does not mean that the body is the base of the mental consciousness. Here, the base of a phenomenon refers to the phenomenon's cause, while that which is based is the result, the phenomenon itself. Hence, our own system argues that even though the body and mental consciousness co-exist, the body does not act as the cause of the mental consciousness.

For instance, the five sense powers exist together in a single being and were produced by the same projecting karma, but they do not relate to each other as cause and effect.



Similarly, the shape and taste of molasses are the result of the same cause and exist together, yet one does not act as the cause of the other.

The substantial cause of the molasses' shape is the cooperative condition of the molasses' taste, and the substantial cause of the molasses' taste is the cooperative condition of the molasses' shape. Therefore, the cause of the molasses' shape and the cause of its taste are synonymous. Also, the two exist together, for there is no molasses that does not have both a shape and a taste. Yet this does not mean that the shape created the taste or vice versa.

[Someone:] Since the mental [consciousness] becomes hazy through poison, and so forth, the body is its [special] empowering condition.

Regarding the second objection, an opponent argues that the body is the special empowering condition and thus the indispensable cause of the mental consciousness, because when a person ingests mind-altering substances, such as certain poisonous plants, his body and in particular, his brain's chemical and neurological structures are altered. As a result, his mental consciousness changes; it may no longer be able, for instance, to perceive things clearly. Thus, the body is the mental consciousness' special empowering condition because any changes to the body – or more specifically to parts of the body such as the brain – strongly affect the mental consciousness; it is mainly in dependence on the mental consciousness' special empowering condition, the body, that these changes take place.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[The mental consciousness] changes on account of [observing] objects.*

[Response:] The mental consciousness does not change on account of [the body being] its [special] empowering condition. The mental awareness changes on account of observing the objects [of the sense consciousnesses].

According to our own system, not only can the ingestion of mind-altering substances lead to physical changes such as increased blood pressure, body temperature etc., it also directly affects the sense powers (closely connected to the central nervous system and the brain).

Since the sense powers are the special empowering conditions and thus the indispensable causes of the sense consciousnesses, the sense powers in turn have a profound impact on sense perception. As a result of taking mind-altering substances, the sense consciousnesses may experience hallucinations; for instance, see images, hear sounds, and or feel sensations that seem real but do not exist.

The mental consciousness, on the other hand, is not affected by these substances in the same way as the sense consciousnesses. Nonetheless, a person may feel anxious, dizzy, confused, etc., which are feelings experienced only by the mental consciousness. Yet these are not the special indispensable effect of the sense powers: they arise as a result of perceiving the objects experienced by the sense consciousnesses. For instance, as an effect of certain psychoactive drugs, a person's sense consciousness may no longer be able to clearly hear what another person is saying. The mental consciousness that is induced by the ear consciousness is unable to make sense of the sounds the ear consciousness perceives and grows anxious and confused as a result.

Therefore, when certain poisonous substances are ingested, the changes experienced by the mental consciousness arise from observing the objects of the sense consciousnesses.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why is a person described as an collection?
2. What is the ripening cause of the body and the mental consciousness of an ordinary being?
3. Why is it not correct to assert that the body serves as the special empowering condition of the mental consciousness even though the mental consciousness of a person who ingested poison may experience confusion?

## IDENTIFYING A RESULT'S SPECIAL INDISPENSABLE CAUSE

Under this heading, our own system provides a brief explanation of a special indispensable cause.

[Someone:] What is a special indispensable cause?

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since [the rays of a butter-lamp] always come after [the flame of a butter-lamp]  
Just through the existence of a particular [flame of a butter-lamp, the flame] contributes  
to [the rays]*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, the rays of a butter-lamp, the flame of a butter-lamp is their indispensable cause, because just through the existence of a particular flame of a butter-lamp prior [to the rays of that butter-lamp, the flame] directly contributes to [those rays]. This follows since [the rays of the butter-lamp] always come after their direct substantial cause, the flame of the butter-lamp.

In answer to someone's inquiry about a special indispensable cause, our own system provides an example:

The flame of a butter-lamp is the special indispensable cause of the butter-lamp's rays because it is the substantial cause of those rays. Just through the presence of the flame of a butterlamp — along with the necessary cooperative conditions such as oxygen, fuel, and so forth — the flame contributes to its substantial result, the rays of the butter-lamp, by transforming into those rays.

Please note that it is necessary to add the phrase “along with the necessary cooperative conditions” because the indispensable cause, the flame of the butter-lamp, can only generate its substantial result, the rays of the butter-lamp, if all the required cooperative conditions are complete. Should any of these conditions be missing, the rays cannot arise.

The flame (assisted by all the necessary cooperative conditions), which will have become the rays a moment later, is described as the “*direct cause with unimpeded potential*” (Tib: *dngos rgyu nus pa thogs med*) of the rays.

The rays' *direct cause with unimpeded potential* is called thus because all the necessary causes and conditions being complete, there is nothing that can hinder it from giving rise to the rays<sup>131</sup>.

This may elicit the following debate: since the flame of a butter-lamp is fire<sup>132</sup> and acts as the substantial cause of the rays of the flame, it follows that a tangible object (*i.e.*, the principal object of a body consciousness) can become or transform into a visual object (*i.e.*, the principal object of an eye consciousness). This is because the flame of the butter-lamp is fire and thus a tangible object, while its rays are a visual object.

Fire is a tangible object because it is the *element of fire* which is defined as 'that which is hot and burning'. 'That which is hot and burning' can only be experienced by a body consciousness, not by any of the other sense consciousnesses. The rays of the flame, on the other hand, are a visual object since we can perceive them with our eye consciousness.

Someone may argue that it is not correct to assert that a tangible object can become a visual object, for tangible objects serve only as the substantial cause of other tangible objects, not of visual objects, sounds, smells, or tastes. The same is true for the remaining sense objects: they only transform into a later continuum that is the principal object of the same sense consciousness; they do not become other sense objects.

In response, some scholars say that there is no fault since a tangible object can transform into a visual object. This is because Vasubhandu explains in his *Abidharmakosha* that the four elements (earth, water, fire, and wind element) which are tangible objects are the substantial cause of a vase, a visual object.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*In order [to understand] that [indispensable] cause, [a sutra] sets forth  
The seventh [locative case] and, "Because [this] was generated [that is generated]".* v.51

Therefore, there is a reason why a sutra **sets forth the seventh** [locative] case of a reason [when it says], "If this exists, that arises," and the fifth [ablative case], a term [indicating] a source [when it says], "Because this was generated, that is generated". It sets them forth in order to understand "**that** is what is needed to be a special indispensable **cause**".

The sutra cited here is the *Rice Seedling Sutra* (Skt: *Salistambasutra*, Tib: *sa lu'i ljang pa'i mdo*) in which the Buddha explains dependent arising in relation to causes and conditions (based on the example of the twelve links) and speaks of three conditions or characteristics with regard to an effect and its cause:

*Dependent arising is thus: (1) If there is this, that arises. (2) Because this was generated, that is generated. (3) Due to ignorance there is compositional action; due*

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<sup>131</sup> It is important to understand that it is logically correct to say: *if there is a sprout, it is pervaded by there being a seed* (*i.e.*, wherever there is a sprout, there is necessarily a seed) because a sprout must be preceded by its cause, a seed. Yet it is not correct to say: *if there is a seed, it is pervaded by there being a sprout* (*i.e.*, wherever there is a seed, there is necessarily a sprout) since a seed does not necessarily give rise to a sprout. For instance, a seed that is not assisted by any of the sprout's essential cooperative conditions is unable to produce a sprout.

On the other hand, it is correct to say: *if there is a sprout's 'direct cause with unimpeded potential', it is pervaded by there being a sprout* (*i.e.*, wherever there is a sprout's 'direct cause with unimpeded potential', there is necessarily a sprout). This is because a sprout's *direct cause with unimpeded potential* is a direct cause that is assisted by all the causes and condition necessary to generate a sprout and there is nothing that can prevent that cause from generating the sprout, for there is nothing that can prevent the coming into existence of the sprout a moment later.

Therefore, it is also correct to say that whatever is a sprout's *direct cause with unimpeded potential* definitely generates or gives rise to a sprout.

<sup>132</sup> Please note that the term "flame of a butter-lamp" is a translation of the Tibetan word *mar me* which literally means "butter fire" (*mar* means butter and *me*, fire).

*to compositional action there is consciousness; due to consciousness there is name and form; due to name and form there are the six sense spheres; due to the six sense spheres there is contact; due to contact there is feeling; due to feeling there is craving; due to craving there is grasping; due to grasping there is existence; due to existence there is birth; and due to birth there is aging and death.*

The three characteristics are as follows:

(1) When the Buddha says, “*If there is this, that arises,*” he indicates that impermanent phenomena, such as living beings, the sense objects, etc. do not come into existence through the control of a divine creator, such as Ishvara or another creator God. Instead, impermanent phenomena arise as results of their own causes and conditions. In fact, it is only on account of the existence of certain causes and conditions that specific results can arise.

Also, (2) just as the results are impermanent, their causes and conditions must be impermanent. Impermanent phenomena cannot be generated by permanent causes and conditions. They can only be generated by *impermanent* causes and conditions that were themselves generated by other impermanent causes and conditions. This is pointed out when the Buddha says, “*Because this was generated, that is generated.*”

Please note that the word “generate” implies impermanence: although permanent phenomena come into existence or arise, they are not ‘generated’. Hence, it is only if a phenomenon’s causes and conditions were generated and are thus impermanent that the result the phenomenon – can be generated.

However, a result cannot come into existence in dependence on just any impermanent causes and conditions; (3) the causes and conditions must also have the *potential* to generate particular results. For example, a lemon tree arises in dependence on a seed that has the potential to give rise to a lemon tree; it is not generated by an apple or an orange seed.

Similarly, the second of the twelve links, compositional action, is the result of the first link, ignorance, which holds the potential to give rise to the second link. Compositional action, in turn, has the potential to generate consciousness, and so forth. The Buddha says, “*Due to ignorance there is compositional action; due to compositional action there is consciousness; due to consciousness there is name and form ... and due to birth there is aging and death.*”

By citing parts of the ***Rice Seedling Sutra***, Dharmakirti indicates that just as *any* result must have these three characteristics, so does the result of a special indispensable cause: (1) it was generated by causes and conditions, (2) its causes and conditions were impermanent, and (3) its causes and conditions had the potential to generate that result<sup>133</sup>.

This also implies that an indispensable cause is: (1) a cause and a condition (*i.e.*, a substantial cause of some phenomena and a cooperative condition of others), (2) impermanent, and (3) it holds the potential to produce or generate its results.

Dharmakirti further indicates that a special indispensable cause is such that (1) if there is an indispensable cause (along with the other necessary causes and conditions) its result can come into existence and (2) because an indispensable cause has been generated, its result can be generated. If on the other hand, the indispensable cause were permanent, its result could not be impermanent.

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<sup>133</sup> Although Dharmakirti does not explicitly mention the third characteristic, it is held to be implied.

Grammatically the first quote (“*If there is this, that arises*”) indicates the ‘seventh locative case of a reason’, while the second quote (“*Because this was generated, that is generated*”) indicates the ‘fifth ablative case’. This is so for both Sanskrit and Tibetan<sup>134</sup>.

The conjunction “if” of the first quote, “*If there is this, that arises*” is a ‘locative of the reason’ because in Sanskrit and Tibetan (a) it expresses location and (b) indicates a reason (here, it indicates the reason why “*that arises*”).

For instance, when applying the two quotes to the example of the flame of a butter-lamp and its substantial result, the rays of the butter-lamp, the first quote says, “if there is the flame of a butter-lamp, the rays of a butter-lamp can arise”.

The word “if” (a) expresses location because it indicates the possibility of a place where there is the indispensable cause required to produce the rays of a butter-lamp.

Furthermore, the word “if” (b) indicates a reason, for it indicates that a reason (*there is the flame of a butter-lamp*) is pervaded by a predicate (*the rays of the butter-lamp can arise*). In other words, the “if” expresses the reason why the rays can arise, because it indicates: “the rays of the butter-lamp can arise *because* there is their indispensable cause”.

The second phrase (“*Because this was generated, that is generated*”) indicates the ‘fifth ablative case’ as it implies the source word “from” (Tib: *byung khungs kyi sgra*).

This is because the phrase actually means, “From this having been generated, that is generated.” However, since this wording would have disrupted the meter (the sutra was translated from the original Sanskrit into Tibetan) the earlier wording was chosen.

When applying the second phrase to the same example of a flame and its rays, it reads, “Because the flame (along with the necessary cooperative conditions) was generated, the rays can be generated”. The actual meaning of the phrase is, “From the flame having been generated, the rays can be generated” with the source word “from” indicating the cause of the rays.

Thus, since a knower possessing attachment is pervaded by definitely giving rise to a later [continuum of a] similar type, when [the correct reason] establishes that [pervasion] in conjunction with the death-mind of an ordinary being, one establishes that future lives definitely exist. Hence, [it is not feasible] to entertain the objection that since one only infers that [the death-mind of an ordinary being] is *suitable* to give rise [to a continuum of a similar type, one] does not establish that [the death-mind] *definitely* gives rise [to a later continuum].

In general, whatever is the *direct cause with unimpeded potential* of a phenomenon definitely gives rise to it, since there is nothing that can prevent that direct cause from giving rise to the phenomenon<sup>135</sup>. This means that whatever is a mental consciousness’ *direct cause with unimpeded potential* definitely gives rise to that mental consciousness.

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<sup>134</sup> Since Tibetan grammar is based on Sanskrit grammar both Sanskrit and Tibetan have eight cases. The eight cases are: (1) nominative, (2) accusative, (3) instrumental, (4) dative, (5) ablative, (6) genitive, (7) locative, and (8) vocative. These cases also have different divisions, with ‘the locative of a reason’ being a division of the seventh case.

The following explanation is based on Gen Lamrimpa Ngawang Phuntshok’s commentary on the *Pramanavarttika*, *Clouds of Offerings to Delight the Impartial Ones: A Mnemonic Note on Pramana* (Tib: *tshad ma’i brjed byang gzur gnas dgyes pa’i mchod sprin*). Gen Lamrimpa (1922-1997) was a great contemporary master from Drepung Loseling Monastery in Lhasa who never left Tibet but served as the spiritual teacher of many great masters who have fled to India to escape the Chinese invasion (e.g. Geshe Palden Drakpa).

<sup>135</sup> Please note that the direct cause of a phenomenon is not necessarily that phenomenon’s *direct cause with unimpeded potential*. For instance, a seed is the direct cause of a sprout, for it directly transforms into the sprout without first becoming a phenomenon other than the sprout. But it is not the sprout’s *direct cause with unimpeded potential* since there is no certainty as to the seed actually giving rise to the sprout. This is because a bird, for instance, may eat the seed and thus prevent the creation of the sprout.

Consequently, the following is a correct syllogism establishing that future lives definitely exist: *Regarding the subject, the death-mind of an ordinary being, it definitely gives rise to a later continuum of a similar type, because it is a mental consciousness possessing attachment.*

When the correct reason (*because it is a mental consciousness possessing attachment*) establishes the syllogism's pervasion based on its subject (*the death-mind of an ordinary being*), the respondent of the syllogism will come to realize the existence of future lives.

The syllogism's pervasion is: *if something is a consciousness possessing attachment, it is pervaded by definitely giving rise to a later continuum of a similar type* (i.e. *whatever is the consciousness of a being who has attachment definitely gives rise to a later continuum of a similar type*).

Whatever is a consciousness possessing attachment *definitely* gives rise to a later continuum of a similar type, because whatever is such a consciousness is necessarily the *direct cause with unimpeded potential* of its later continuum. For instance, the death-mind of an ordinary being is the *direct cause with unimpeded potential* of a later continuum of a similar type because it is assisted by all the necessary cooperative conditions — such as attachment and other afflictions — needed for the death-mind to transform into that later continuum. In fact, any mental consciousness in the continuum of an ordinary being is the *direct cause with unimpeded potential* of the later continuum of the consciousness, because an ordinary being possesses afflictions and, thus, all the necessary cooperative conditions which assist the mental consciousness to transform into a later moment of mental consciousness.

When one realizes the syllogism's pervasion based on the subject (*the death mind of an ordinary being*), one realizes that *the death mind of an ordinary being* is the common locus of: (a) *definitely giving rise to a later continuum of a similar type* (the predicate) and (b) *being a consciousness possessing attachment* (the reason). Upon realizing that the death mind of an ordinary being is both of these, one realizes that *the death mind of an ordinary being definitely gives rise to a later continuum of a similar type*, which is the syllogism's thesis.

Once the thesis is understood, one comes to realize that there are *definitely* future lives.

Therefore — our own system argues — it would not make sense to raise the following objection: the syllogism above merely establishes that an ordinary being's death-mind *may* give rise to a continuum of a similar type; it does not establish that an ordinary death-mind *definitely* gives rise to such a later type.

Khedrup Je says in his *Ocean of Reasoning* that this objection was raised by Prajnakaragupta.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*It is easy [to understand] that sometimes [the body]  
Contributes to the mental continuum;  
Like fire, etc. [temporarily contributes] to a vase, etc.  
Just from that [through the power of the body coming to an end, the mind] does not  
cease.*

It is easy [to understand] that the body sometimes contributes to the mental continuum. Yet, even so, it does not follow that through the power of the body coming to an end the mind ceases, because [the body] is not the [mind's] special indispensable cause of a different substantial entity. For instance, like fire, etc. temporarily contributes to a clay vase, etc.

As mentioned before, the body (or parts of the body) can serve as a cause of particular types of mental consciousness. For instance, the conceptual mental consciousness

thinking about a song is a result of a part of the body, the ear sense power. The ear sense power contributes to that mental consciousness as it gives rise directly to the ear consciousness perceiving the song, and indirectly to the conceptual mental consciousness thinking about the song.

Also, in general, the present life's body is a cause of this life's mental consciousness, for it serves as the vessel or base of awareness. This is similar to a vase that serves as the vessel and thus a cause of the water inside the vase. Yet, just as the vase is not the *indispensable cause* of the water in the vase, the present life's body is not the *indispensable cause* of this life's mental consciousness.

Furthermore, just as the vase is not a cause of water, the body is not a cause of mental consciousness in general.

Since the body is not the mental consciousness' cause, it is not its *indispensable cause*. Hence, the mental consciousness does not go out of existence through the power of the body going out of existence, *i.e.*, the existence of the mental consciousness does not depend on the existence of the body, because a being who is reborn in the formless realm has a mental consciousness but does not have a body.

This is similar to fire and a clay pot: In order for a clay pot to become hard and sturdy it needs to be baked in a ceramic kiln. Therefore, fire contributes to the clay pot in that it contributes to hardening the clay pot. However, fire is not the pot's *indispensable cause* because once the pot has been hardened, its existence no longer depends on the fire.

Hypothetically, if fire were the *indispensable cause* of the clay pot, it would be the clay pot's *special cooperative condition* (or *special empowering condition*); it would not be the pot's *substantial cause* since fire does not transform into a clay pot.

If fire were the clay pot's *special cooperative condition*, the fire would continue to contribute to the pot long after the pot had been hardened. In fact, the pot could not exist unless the fire continued to contribute to the pot's existence<sup>136</sup>.

Please note that Gyaltsab Je says that the body is not the mental consciousness' *indispensable cause of a different substantial entity* ("Yet just from that it does not follow that through the power of the body coming to an end the mind ceases, because [the body] is not the [mind's] special indispensable cause of a different substantial entity").

An *indispensable cause* and an *indispensable cause of a different substantial entity* are synonymous. Similarly a *cause* and a *cause of a different substantial entity* are synonymous. This is because a cause is necessarily of a different substantial entity than its result<sup>137</sup>.

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<sup>136</sup> Examples of special cooperative conditions are the sense powers or water: An eye sense power is the special cooperative condition of an eye consciousness: not only does any positive or negative change in the eye sense power have a positive or negative impact on the eye consciousness, an eye consciousness can only manifest as long as there is an eye sense power to which a visual object appears. Similarly, water is the special cooperative condition of a plant because the quality of the water affects the health of the plant and, were it not to regularly receive a certain amount of water, the plant would die.

<sup>137</sup> Some scholars explain that it would be just as accurate for Gyaltsab Je to say that the body is not the mental consciousness' indispensable cause (instead of specifying that it is not the mental consciousness' indispensable cause *of a different entity*). Gyaltsab Je often seems to add to his explanations some words or phrases that may initially seem unnecessary but serve the purpose of providing additional information, thus enabling those who study and contemplate the material to gain a better understanding.

Since the mental consciousness is a cause of the body (and not the other way around) the mental consciousness is the body's *cause of a different substantial entity*<sup>138</sup>.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. Why is the flame of a butter-lamp the indispensable cause of the rays of a butter-lamp?
2. What are the three characteristics of a result and its cause described in the *Rice Seedling Sutra*?
3. Why does the sutric passage, "*If there is this, that arises*" indicate the 'seventh locative case of a reason'?
4. Why does the sutric passage, "*Because this was generated, that is generated*" indicate the fifth ablative case?
5. What is a *direct cause with unimpeded potential*?
6. Why does the death mind of an ordinary being definitely give rise to a later continuum of a similar type?
7. If something is a consciousness possessing attachment, why is it pervaded by *definitely* giving rise to a continuum of a similar type?
8. Why does one realize the thesis of a syllogism when realizing the syllogism's pervasion based on the subject?
9. Why does the mental consciousness not go out of existence by the power of the body going out of existence?
10. What does it mean for two phenomena to be of one substantial entity or of different substantial entities?

## AN EXTENSIVE EXPLANATION

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation [of the idea] that the body is the special base of awareness
- (2) Dispelling [the attempt] to contradict the refutation

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<sup>138</sup> There are only two possibilities for the relationship between two impermanent phenomena: either they are of one substantial entity (Tib: *rdzas gcig*) or of different substantial entities (Tib: *rdzas tha dad*). For two or more phenomena to be of one substantial entity means that they are (a) impermanent and (b) of one nature, while being of different substantial entities means that they are (a) impermanent and (b) of a different nature.

Two phenomena that relate to one another as cause and effect are of different substantial entities (and thus of different natures) because they do not exist at the same time. However, if two phenomena are of different substantial entities, it does not mean that one is the cause of the other, nor that they do not exist at the same time. For instance, a table and chair exist at the same time and do not relate to one another as cause and effect. Yet they are of different substantial entities since they are impermanent and of a different nature. They are of a different nature because they do not depend on each other for their existence.

If two phenomena are of one substantial entity they are both impermanent and of one nature. They are of one nature because one is an attribute, a part, or an instance, etc. of the other. For example, a tree and its impermanence are of one substantial entity because both are impermanent, and the tree's impermanence is an attribute of the tree. Similarly, the tree and its stem are of one substantial entity since the tree's stem is a part of the tree. Likewise, the tree and impermanent are of one substantial entity, for the tree is an instance of impermanent.

It is important to note that if phenomena are of one substantial entity or of different substantial entities, they are necessarily impermanent. Although *permanent* phenomena relate to each other as being of one nature or of a different nature, they are not of one substantial entity or of a different substantial entity, for being of one or different substantial entities implies impermanence.



## **REFUTATION [OF THE IDEA] THAT THE BODY IS THE SPECIAL BASE OF AWARENESS**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation through an analysis of the way in which the body acts as the basis of the mental awareness
- (2) Refutation through an analysis of the aspects of the nature of the body that acts as the base [of the mental awareness]

## **REFUTATION THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE BODY ACTS AS THE BASE OF THE MENTAL AWARENESS**

If the body were the special base, *i.e.*, the indispensable cause of the mental consciousness, it would be either (1) the mental consciousness' substantial cause or (2) its special cooperative condition. Both are refuted extensively in the following outlines:

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation [of the idea] that [the body] acts as the substantial cause
- (2) Refutation [of the idea] that [the body] is the special cooperative condition

## **REFUTATION [OF THE IDEA] THAT THE BODY ACTS AS THE SUBSTANTIAL CAUSE**

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation through an analysis of [their] successive [existence]
- (2) Refutation through an analysis of [their] simultaneous [existence]

## **REFUTATION THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF [THEIR] SUCCESSIVE [EXISTENCE]**

As mentioned above, according to the Lokayatas there are three possibilities for the way in which the body serves as the special base of the mental consciousness, and thus for the way in which the mental consciousness depends on the body:

- a) The mental awareness is the *result* of the body and arises from it, like the rays of a flame arise from the flame. Or,
- b) The mental awareness is a *quality* or *attribute* of the body, like the capacity to intoxicate is an attribute of liquor. Or,
- c) The mental awareness *depends* on the body by way of being a part of the body, like a mural is part of a wall.

In the following outlines, our own system addresses the first of the three misperceptions by refuting the view that the body is the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, and thus that the body and its substantial result, the mental consciousness, exist in succession, *i.e.*, that the body arises first and the mental consciousness later.

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing a consequence
- (2) Refutation of the answer to that
- (3) Setting forth the definition of a substantial cause

## CITING A CONSEQUENCE

Addressing those who hold the view that the body is the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, our own system presents a logical consequence in order to reveal the logical absurdity of such a view:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If the body abides, it follows that  
There is no ceasing of the mind.*

Regarding the subject, a dead body, **it follows that** with regard to [that body] **there is no ceasing of the mind**, because with regard to [a dead body] the **body abides** as the complete substantial cause of that [mind].

The consequence is: *Regarding the subject, a corpse, it follows that there is still a mental consciousness with the corpse, because the corpse is the substantial cause of that mental consciousness.*

In other words, if the body were the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, it would absurdly follow that a corpse has a mental consciousness since that dead body would possess all the necessary attributes to act as the substantial cause of the mental consciousness.

If a corpse were to act as the substantial cause of a mental consciousness, it would be linked to a mental consciousness, because the corpse — along with the necessary cooperative conditions — would give rise to a mental consciousness which would then reside with that dead body.

The mental consciousness would reside with the corpse, because in the case of the body of someone who is alive, if the living body were to have generated its substantial result, a mental consciousness, that mental consciousness would reside with the body. So the mental consciousness would likewise reside with the corpse if the consciousness were the substantial result of that corpse.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the consequence cited by our own system?
2. How does the consequence address the misperception of the opponent?
3. If a corpse were a substantial cause of a mental consciousness why would a corpse and mental consciousness reside together?

## REFUTATION OF THE REPLY TO THAT

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Refutation of the reply that the necessary conditions are not complete
- (2) Refutation of the reply that there is disruption by adverse conditions

## REFUTATION OF THE REPLY THAT THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS ARE NOT COMPLETE

In this outline, our own system refutes an opponent's claim that although a dead body is the substantial cause of a mental consciousness it cannot generate the mental consciousness because the necessary empowering conditions are incomplete.

Someone says: Since the [special empowering] condition, respiration, is lacking, even though there is the substantial cause [of the mental consciousness], a body, it follows that there is no non-ceasing [of the mental consciousness], as in the case of fainting.

In response to the consequence presented above, an opponent argues that although a dead body is the substantial cause of a mental consciousness, the corpse is not linked to a mental consciousness since it does not generate such an awareness. The dead body is unable to give rise to a mental consciousness because it lacks the necessary special empowering condition, respiration.

For instance, like a person who faints. According to the opponent, there is no mental consciousness while unconscious, for although the body of the person who fainted is the consciousness' substantial cause, the body is not assisted by the necessary special empowering condition, respiration, and is thus unable to give rise to the mental consciousness. This is because the opponent holds that a person who has fainted does not breathe.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Since it is [through] the existence [of the mind] that [respiration] exists and [through] the influence [of effort that respiration becomes weak or strong],  
Exhalation and inhalation [arise] from that [mind, and respiration is] not that [mind's special empowering condition].  
[If it were] not the case that breathing out and drawing in [air arise]  
From exerted effort, [they] would [not arise] from any [cause].*

[Response:] It follows **that exhalation and inhalation arise from** the conceptual mental awareness, and [respiration] **is not** the special empowering condition of **that** conceptual mental awareness, **since it is** (a) through the power of **the existence** of the conceptual mental awareness **that** respiration **exists and** (b) through **the influence** of [the mental factor of] effort that respiration becomes strong or weak. This follows since a being's **breathing out and drawing in** air arise **from exerted effort** that precedes [the act of respiration]. If that were **not the case**, it **would** not be feasible to [assert] that [respiration] arises **from any** cause.

Our own system replies that respiration is not a special empowering condition of the mental consciousness, for it is not a cause of the mental consciousness. Instead, the mental consciousness is a cause of respiration since a particular mental consciousness, *effort*, acts as a cause of breathing.

Effort is a conceptual mental factor, which according to some scholars<sup>139</sup> is ever-present while we are awake and precedes each round of breathing. Not only is that mental factor the cause of respiration, it also serves as the *special empowering condition* and thus the *indispensable cause* of breathing during the waking state.

Dharmakirti cites two reasons why effort is the indispensable cause of respiration while we are awake:

- (a) It is through the power of effort that respiration occurs, and
- (b) any positive or negative changes to the effort have a positive or negative effect on the breathing. This means that the intensity of respiration depends on the intensity of the effort. For instance, some people stop breathing when they are single-pointedly focused on an activity or are startled, for at that time the effort is temporarily impeded by other awarenesses.

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<sup>139</sup> For instance, Geshe Thubten Pelsang holds that while we are awake each round of breathing is induced by the mental factor of effort. Geshe Thubten Pelsang is a great contemporary scholar and meditator who completed his studies at Drepung Loseling Monastery and currently lives in semi-retreat at Tsecholing Monastery in McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala (India).

If that were not the case – Dharmakirti argues – *i.e.*, if the mental factor of effort were not responsible for exhalations and inhalations during the waking state, it would not be possible to posit any other causes of respiration.

Someone says: Well, then, it follows that at the time of deep sleep there is no exhalation and inhalation, because [at that time] there is no effort that is a conceptual awareness.

An opponent argues that if effort is the indispensable cause of respiration, it follows that at the time of deep sleep a person stops breathing because there is no effort present in his continuum. There is no effort because effort is a coarse type of consciousness which does not manifest during deep sleep.

[Response:] There is not the slightest flaw. The exhalation and inhalation of the present deep sleep are pervaded by being propelled by a previous mental awareness of volition referred to as karma. Thus, if there is a fire, fuel precedes it, yet why should it be that at the time of there being fire, it is pervaded by there being fuel.

Although our own system agrees that during deep sleep there is no coarse consciousness<sup>140</sup> and therefore no effort (as the mental factor of effort is a coarse type of awareness), it does not agree with the opponent's argument: Despite the absence of effort in the continuum of someone in a state of deep sleep, his breathing does not stop. This is because at that time, respiration is not the result of effort but of the projecting karma (accumulated in a past life) that propelled the living being into the present rebirth.

As mentioned above, according to the Sautrantika School, the mental factor of volition concomitant with a mental consciousness is either projecting karma or completing karma. Of the two, it is projecting karma that causes us to continue to breathe during states when there is no coarse consciousness and thus no effort.

Yet, even though the resultant breathing is present during deep sleep, that does not mean – as someone may suggest – that its cause, the propelling karma, must be present. For instance, although fire is generated by its cause, fuel, at the time when there is fuel there is no fire. This is because a cause and its result cannot exist at the same time.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Through the enhancement or decline of those [respirations]  
The enhancement or decline [of the mental consciousness] would be obtained.  
It would equally follow that also with regard to [a corpse] those [respirations would not  
cease].* v.54

It would follow [from your assertion] that **through the enhancement or decline** of those respirations **the enhancement or decline** of the mental awareness **would be obtained**, because those [respirations] are the special empowering condition of that [mental awareness].

**It would equally follow** [from your assertion] **that also with regard to** a dead body **those** respirations would not cease, because the **body** would **abide** as the complete substantial cause of that [respiration]. Therefore, since the [special empowering] conditions would be complete, the absurdity that the mental awareness does not cease would remain as before.

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<sup>140</sup> Unlike the tantric system of Buddhism, the sutric system does not set forth different types of subtle consciousness that manifest while fainting, sleeping, dying, and so forth. However, it nonetheless accepts that coarse consciousness such as the sense consciousnesses and coarse mental consciousnesses do not arise at those times. Only subtle types of mental consciousness are present in the continuum of someone who has fainted, is sleeping, and so forth.

Furthermore, based on the opponent's claim that respiration is the special empowering condition of the mental consciousness, the following two absurdities occur. The first is: If respiration were the special empowering condition and thus the indispensable cause of the mental consciousness, it would follow that any positive or negative changes to the breathing would positively or negatively impact the mental consciousness. Therefore, if the breath were enhanced or declined, the mental consciousness would have to be heightened or decline. However, we can understand from our own experience that this is not necessarily the case. For instance, if someone has difficulty breathing, it does not necessarily mean that his mental consciousness has to struggle to think.

Of course, there is a correlation between breathing and the mental consciousness. Yet, in general, it is the mental consciousness that affects respiration. The mental consciousness becoming excited quickens the breathing, while the mental consciousness growing calmer slows down the intake and release of air.

Our own system further argues that another absurdity occurs, since the opponent holds that the body is the substantial cause of respiration:

It would follow that a dead body would breathe, because, as a body, it is the substantial cause of respiration and thus gives rise to it.

If the opponent agrees that a corpse breathes, the same absurdity indicated in the consequence of the previous outline would occur:

It would follow that a corpse has a mental consciousness, because as a body, the corpse would serve as a mental consciousness' substantial cause and would give rise to that mental consciousness. The corpse would generate a mental consciousness since (as the opponent has come to agree) it would do so while being assisted by the mental consciousness' special empowering condition, the corpse's respiration.

Someone says: Well, then, for you it would also follow that the mind with regard to a dead body does not cease, because there is the substantial cause, the mind.

An opponent argues that there is also a logical absurdity based on our own system's assertions: a corpse would have a mental consciousness, because it would be linked to the mental consciousness that is the result of its substantial cause, the death-mind.

Here an opponent fails to understand that even though the death-mind is the substantial cause of a subsequent mental consciousness, that subsequent mental consciousness is not linked to the dead body but to a new body. This is because while someone is dying the link between his mental consciousness and his body is severed and the subsequent mental consciousness (that is the substantial result of, and arises a moment after the death-mind) is linked to another body – in all likelihood to the body of an intermediate state being (unless the rebirth is into the formless realm and not preceded by an intermediate state).

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*If mind is the cause [of mind], it does not equally follow that [a corpse has a mental consciousness].*

*Another projecting [karma] also [gives rise to body and mind] remaining [together] Because [we] accept that it is the cause [of body and mind co-existing].*

[Response:] **If mind is the** [substantial] **cause** of mind, **it does not equally follow that** [the mind] with regard to a dead body does not cease. Why? Because [we] accept that another projecting karma — [giving rise to the next life's] body and mind remaining together — is also the cause of those two remaining together.

Our own system replies that although the mental consciousness – and thus the death-mind – is the substantial cause of a subsequent mental consciousness, this does not

mean that a corpse has a mental consciousness. The reason is that at the time of death the link between the body and mental consciousness is gradually severed, for the projecting karma that caused the mind to be propelled in that body at the time of conception no longer keeps the body and mind together.

At that time another projecting karma (previously dormant in the form of a seed or potential) is activated and propels the mental consciousness into a new rebirth.

If the being is going to be reborn in the Desire or Form Realm, the projecting karma propels and links the mental consciousness to a new body – initially into the body of an intermediate state being and thereafter into a body associated with one of the six Desire Realms or one of the seventeen states of the Form Realm.

Not only does the projecting karma propel the mental consciousness into a new body, it also serves as the cause of the co-existence of the two — the mental consciousness and the body in that impending rebirth. In other words, the projecting is responsible for the mind and the body to remain together throughout that new lifetime.

Therefore, although a death-mind is the substantial cause of a subsequent mental consciousness, a death-mind does not serve as a cause of the co-existence of the subsequent mental consciousness and the body within which the subsequent mental consciousness resides.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. How does an opponent respond to the absurdity our own system presented in the previous outline, and what is the example he cites?
2. According to our own system, why is respiration not the special empowering condition of the mental consciousness?
3. What is the special empowering condition of respiration while we are awake?
4. What is the special empowering condition of respiration during deep sleep?
5. What would be the absurdity if respiration were the special empowering condition of mental consciousness?
6. What is the cause of the co-existence of the body and the mental consciousness of a human being?

## REFUTATION OF THE REPLY THAT THERE IS DISRUPTION BY ADVERSE CONDITIONS

[This is divided into:]

- (1) Citing a consequence
- (2) Refutation of the reply to that

## CITING A CONSEQUENCE

Under this heading, our own system presents another consequence addressing the response by an opponent who says that a dead body is prevented from generating a mental consciousness by certain adverse conditions.

[Dharmakīrti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Suppose [someone says:] just as a stick, etc. [does not catch fire when charmed with mantras]*

*On account of the humors [a mind] is at odds [with a dead] body which is not the cause [of the mind].*

**Suppose** someone says: **just as a stick, etc.** charmed by mantras does not catch fire, likewise, **on account of the humors**, — wind, bile, and so forth — a mind **is at odds** with remaining with a dead **body which is not the** [substantial] **cause** of the mind. Therefore, the absurdities [you cited before] do not apply, because you also accept that a result cannot be generated by reason of being disrupted by adverse conditions.

An opponent may raise the following argument: although in general, a dead body is the substantial cause of a mental consciousness, it cannot act as such a cause when it is obstructed from doing so by unfavourable circumstances such as an imbalance of the three humors (wind, bile, and phlegm)<sup>141</sup>. In other words, when a person has died from an illness (which implies an imbalance of the three humors) his corpse is no longer able to give rise to a mental consciousness.

For example, although a wooden stick is a cause of a wood fire<sup>142</sup>, when someone casts a spell on the stick or simply drenches it with water, the wood can no longer ignite and serve as a cause of fire. So, the illness, the spell, and the drenching of the stick act here as adverse conditions that impede or hinder a phenomenon from serving as the cause of a particular result.

Therefore — the opponent argues — the absurdities presented by our own system in the previous outlines, in order to establish that a dead body is not the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, are not effective in refuting the opponent's assertion.

Interestingly, the opponent's assertion here seems to be reflected in the view of people opting to undergo *cryopreservation* — a process of low-temperature preservation of the body after death — with the hope that resuscitation and restoration to full health may be possible with medical advancement in the far future.

Cryonics is based on the belief that a human survives even within a badly damaged inactive brain, provided that the original encoding of memory and personality can be adequately deduced and restored from the remaining structure. Its goal is to keep the body preserved until future developments in science and technology make it possible to resuscitate the body and repair or replace the tissues, organs, etc. that prevented the person's survival at the time.

Therefore, cryonics seems to hold that the body is the substantial cause of the mental consciousness (although it may not use the same terminology) in that the body is the substantial cause of the brain which in turn is the substantial cause of awareness. Also, it holds that the brain gives rise to consciousness as long as it is not prevented from doing so by adverse conditions such as illness, accidents, and so forth.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*[Since] due to having died the flaws have degenerated at [that] time,  
[The mind with regard to a dead body] would come to life again. v.56*

[Response:] It **would** follow that **at the time of having died**, the mind with regard to the dead body **comes to life again**, because (a) the [mental consciousness] substantial

<sup>141</sup> According to traditional Indian and Tibetan medicine, the three humors (Tib: *nyes pa gsum*) are vital substances of the body. The three humors are wind (Tib: *rlung*), bile (Tib: *mkhris pa*), and phlegm (Tib: *bad kan*). They are responsible for the basic functioning of the body. In a healthy individual the three humors are in balance, while illness is caused by an imbalance or a prevalence of one or more humors.

<sup>142</sup> A wooden stick is the cause of a wood fire since fuel is the cause of fire. Chandrakirti says that fuel is the cause of fire in his *Supplement to the Middle Way* (Skt: *Madhyamakavatara*, Tib: *dbu ma la 'jug pa*): "This is like there being no fire without there being fuel." Lama Tsongkhapa explains the meaning of this line in his commentary on the *Supplement to the Middle Way, Clarifying the Thought*: "This is, for example, like the absence of fire, the effect, when there is no fuel, which is the cause."

cause, the body abides and (b) the adverse condition, the [imbalanced] humors become in equal parts non-existent. Alternatively, with regard to the previous absurdity the reason is: because **the flaws deteriorated**.

Our own system responds by citing another consequence, this time addressing the logical flaw of asserting that it is merely on account of adverse conditions that a corpse does not serve as the substantial cause of a mental consciousness:

*It would follow that, after someone has died, a mental consciousness would be revived in the dead body, because (a) a dead body is the substantial cause of a mental consciousness and (b) the adverse condition, the imbalanced humors, all went out of existence with the body.*

In other words, after a person has died from an illness, he would be brought back to life as his mental consciousness would become manifest in his dead body. This would be the case because after death, when the three humors decay and go out of existence, their formerly imbalanced state could no longer pose any obstacle to the corpse serving as the substantial cause of a mental consciousness.

In place of the latter reason, Dharmakirti presents an alternative (with the same predicate as before): *It follows that after someone has died, his mental consciousness would be revived in the corpse, because (a) a dead body is the substantial cause of a mental consciousness and (b) the flaws that caused death have degenerated.*

For instance, if a person died of cancer or poisoning, his mental consciousness would manifest in his dead body because the cancer or poison deteriorate and, as before, no longer prevent the body from giving rise to a mental consciousness.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. According to the opponent, what are the adverse conditions that prevent a corpse from serving as the substantial cause of a mental consciousness?
2. What example does the opponent cite in order to illustrate those adverse conditions?
3. In what way is the view of cryonics similar to that of the opponent here?
4. What is the consequence our own system cites in response to the opponent's view?

## REFUTATION OF THE REPLY TO THAT

In this outline, our own system refutes an opponent's reply to the consequence set forth by our own system in the previous outline. This leads to a debate between our own system and the opponent on the transformation of an object, whether there are incurable illnesses, and so forth:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Suppose someone says: Even if fire ceases,  
The transformed wood does not revert [to its earlier state].  
Likewise, [even if an illness comes to an end] there is no reversal of that [great transformation, death].* v.57

**Suppose someone says: Even if fire ceases**, the **transformed wood** generated [by the fire] **does not revert**. **Likewise** even if the cause of the transformation – [generated] by an adverse condition, a flaw [such as] an illness – comes to an end, **there is no reversal of** the great transformation [caused by] the illness, [i.e.,] **that** of having died.



In response to the consequence presented in the previous outline, an opponent may argue that an illness causes a transformation or change of the body that cannot be reversed. An example of such a transformation is death. Even though the cause of the change (the illness or the imbalance of the humors which gave rise to it) has disintegrated within the corpse, the transformation is not reversible.

For instance, after extinguishing a fire that acted as the cause of a charred piece of wood, the transformation, *i.e.*, the blackening of the wood, cannot be undone.

Therefore – the opponent contends – although the adverse conditions are no longer present, the dead body's inability to serve as the substantial cause of the mental consciousness (which is a result of the adverse conditions) means it cannot be changed back to a body which is once again able to give rise to such an awareness.

[Dharmakīrti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*It is not [suitable that the transformation caused by an illness is not reversible] since there is [benefit to] applying medication.  
[The example and that which is exemplified] are not [compatible] because certain [transforming agents] generate several Transformations which cannot be undone, [while] Certain [transforming agents generate transformations that] can be reversed, [For] example, like wood, and fire as regards to gold.*

[Response:] It follows **it is not** suitable that the transformation [caused by] an illness is not reversible **since there is benefit to applying medication** to an illness.

[Thus] it follows that (a) the example, the transformation of wood caused by fire and (b) that which is exemplified, the transformation [caused by] an illness, are not compatible. This is **because** (1) as with the transformation of **wood** caused by fire, if **certain** transforming agents are of the type that **generates several transformations which cannot be undone**, then even a slight transformation is impossible to reverse; [and] (2) **like fire as regards to gold**, if certain [transforming agents] are of the type [that generates transformations] which may revert, then even great transformations are of the kind that can revert. If the wood [transformed by fire] were a compatible example, it would be impossible to reverse even a small transformation caused by an illness such as an infectious disease, etc.

Our own system replies that the opponent's argument that an illness causes a transformation which cannot be undone is not reasonable, as there are diseases that can be cured when the appropriate medical treatment is applied.

Therefore, since an illness does not necessarily cause changes in the body that are irrevocable, it follows that (a) the opponent's example and (b) that which the example illustrates are incompatible in that the transformation of the example is different from the transformation that it exemplifies. The reason is that there are two types of transformation:

- (i) A transformation that is irreversible
- (ii) A transformation that is reversible

(i) As regards the first, the transformation is such that even if the change is minor it cannot be undone. Certain transforming agents (*i.e.*, phenomena that transform an object) may change an object in such a way that the object can never be restored to its original state. The opponent's example pertains to this type of transformation, since a piece of wood that has been charred by fire cannot be changed back to uncharred wood.

(ii) The second type, on the other hand, can be undone. Certain transforming agents may give rise to radical changes that completely transform an object, yet when those agents are removed, the object reverts to its original state. For instance, although extreme heat transforms solid gold so that its consistency becomes like water or oil, as soon as it cools

down it becomes solid again<sup>143</sup>.

Please note: whether a transformation is irrevocable or not does not only depend on the transforming agent but also on the object and the type of transformation. For instance, fire may do no more than warm a piece of wood without changing its chemical composition.

According to our own system, the transformation of the body caused by an illness can be of the second type — it can be reversible — which is why the opponent's description of it as exclusively giving rise to irreversible change is inaccurate. So, our own system contends that if wood charred by fire were an appropriate example of the changes brought forth by an illness, it would absurdly follow that there is no disease that can be cured.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Even though the first transformation is slight, it is not reversible.  
Some transformation that is suitable to be reversed.  
Can be undone [even if] that [transformation is major].  
Like solid gold.* v.59

**Even the first** (i.e., the irreversible) **transformation is slight**, it follows that **it is not reversible** since wood that is only blackened cannot be reversed to [non-charred] wood. Some transformation that is suitable to be reversed is of the type that even if it is a great [transformation], it can be undone because **solid gold**, even if it has been **like** water, reverts to being solid.

In short, in the first case, an irreversible transformation is such that however minor the change it cannot be reversed. So, although a piece of wood is only slightly burned the charred parts cannot be changed back to their original state.

As for the second type, a reversible transformation can always be undone regardless of how great the change is. An example is molten gold: it solidifies easily once the source of heat is removed.

Someone says: Well, then, it follows that even a great transformation [caused by] an illness is pervaded by being reversible, because a slight transformation is reversible. If you accept that, it contradicts the explanation that there are incurable illnesses.

In response to our own system contending that the transformation of the body caused by a disease could be reversible, an opponent presents the following argument: it would follow that no matter how much the body is transformed by an illness, the change would be necessarily reversible, because a minor change is reversible, and there is no reason why a minor transformation could be reversed, if a radical transformation could not.

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<sup>143</sup> Understanding the difference between reversible and irreversible transformations is helpful with regard to gaining a better comprehension of our mind and our potential to reach the fully enlightened state of a Buddha. Although destructive states of consciousness such as anger, pride, jealousy, and so forth transform a calm and peaceful kind of awareness into a resentful, disturbed, and unhappy one, those changes are reversible. On account of our Buddha Nature, the mind's clear and knowing character can never be affected by the afflictions, and any changes are only temporary.

Similarly, there are reversible positive states of mind such as love and compassion for others which are generated in meditation, yet lack strength and degenerate, leading once again to thoughts of aversion, resentment, etc. However, once a practitioner has entered, for instance, the Mahayana path of accumulation and reached the second level of that path (the middling Mahayana path of accumulation), his attitude of cherishing others, great compassion, Bodhicitta, realization of emptiness, etc. have become irreversible; they can no longer deteriorate; they can no longer change back to the self-centered attitude by which most ordinary beings are controlled. Instead, these wholesome states of mind continue to increase and strengthen until the practitioner reaches the fully enlightened state of a Buddha.

If our own system agrees that a radical transformation of the body, *i.e.*, death, can be reversed, it follows that there are no diseases that cannot be cured.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*An illness is declared to be not curable*

*Because [medicine or a physician] to treat it are difficult to find, or*

*Because of the exhaustion [of the patient's] lifespan..... v.60*

[Response:] Regarding the subject, **an illness** that **is declared to not be curable** in the slightest, it is not explained to be thus owing to being of the type that is impossible to cure, [but] **because it is difficult to find** medicine or a doctor **to treat it**. **Or**, it is through the power of **the exhaustion of the life-span** of the patient who is in the grip of the illness that [the illness] is explained to be thus.

Our own system replies that a disease is considered to be terminal, or if not terminal at least incurable, not because it is impossible to remove its cause in general, but because currently we are unable to do so. There is no cure at present; we have not yet discovered any medicine or treatment to enable physicians to restore the patient's health.

Therefore, the reason someone dies from an illness is not that the illness is incurable but that a cure has not yet been found.

Alternatively, he died because his life-span was exhausted. As mentioned above, projecting karma is not only responsible for the kind of rebirth we take. It also determines the maximum lifespan of a rebirth, the maximum length of time we remain in that life, which is different for each projecting karma. Once the projecting karma is exhausted, we inevitably die.

In general, there are three causes for an ordinary being's death: One is the exhaustion of the projecting karma. The two remaining causes produce a premature death, *i.e.*, dying before the exhaustion of the projecting karma that propelled the being into the present life.

Of the two causes producing premature death, the first consists in the ripening of a negative completing karma. For instance, the completing karma of killing may result in the *causally concordant experiential result*<sup>144</sup> of dying from a disease for which a cure has not

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<sup>144</sup> A causally concordant result (*i.e.*, a result that is similar to its cause) refers to the karmic result of a previously accumulated contaminated action that corresponds either to the action itself or to the experience of the being at whom the action was directed.

There are two types of causally concordant results:

- 1) Causally concordant experiential results
- 2) Causally concordant behavioral results

1) The causally concordant *experiential* result of a contaminated action of the body or speech refers to the *experience* that is the karmic result of the previously accumulated action, and it corresponds to the experience of the being (or beings) at whom that contaminated action was directed. In other words, as a result of a contaminated physical or verbal karma, we undergo an experience that corresponds to the experience we caused by our previous action. For instance, in the case of taking the life of another living being, we cause the other being to experience a premature death. The causally concordant experiential result of the act of killing will be our premature death (which we may experience in this or another life). The causally concordant result of actively refraining from killing is having a long life.

2) The causally concordant *behavioral* result refers to a karmic result of a previously accumulated contaminated action that corresponds to the action itself, since it refers to the kind of *behavior* we adopt as a result of that previous action. We behave in the same way as we used to behave in the past. For example, as a result of killing, we continue to be violent and take a liking to killing; as a result of stealing, even though we may be wealthy and prosperous, we like to steal others' possessions; as a result of sexual misconduct, we are unable to be faithful and frequently change partners, and so forth. As a result of refraining from killing, on the other hand, we spurn taking life and try to protect others from harm; as a result of refraining from stealing, we are very careful about not taking what has not been given; as a result of refraining from sexual misconduct, we are faithful and able to stay with the same partner, and so forth.

yet been found, or from injuries sustained in a car accident. This means that the person's life is shortened by the ripening of the imprints of that karma – ripening in the form of the illness or the fatal accident, etc.

(3) The second cause of dying prematurely is the exhaustion of the merit, that is, the positive karma that is necessary to sustain life. This means one may die from not having accumulated the karmic causes for finding food, shelter, medicine, and so forth.

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*.....If the only [cause of death] were [an imbalance of] the humors,  
There would be no [illnesses] that are not curable.  
Since poison, etc. can be countered, or  
Because that which was bitten can also be cut out  
The cause of the transformation could be overcome.  
If that is so, how could [someone who died of poison] not come to life again.*

If **the only** cause of death **were** an illness [owing to an imbalance] of **the humors**, such as wind, bile, etc., without [death being caused by] incomplete favourable conditions [for survival], it would follow **that there** would be **no illnesses that are not curable**. This is because if there are no other adverse conditions and the favourable conditions [for a cure] are complete, then an illness can definitely be cured. How, it follows, is it not feasible that the body [of someone who] died of poison [as a result of a snakebite] is not revived again since the substantial cause, the body, remains and the adverse conditions, the deadly poison, etc. [can be] countered by mantras and so forth. Or because the cause of the transformation of the illness (*i.e.*, death) [can be] overcome through cutting out the wound [of the one] bitten by that poisonous snake.

If the opponent asserts that death is only caused by an imbalance of the three humors, *i.e.*, by a physical disorder, not by the exhaustion of one's lifespan, etc., it would follow that there would be no diseases that are incurable. When whatever stood in the way of a cure was removed and the patient underwent the proper medical treatment, followed an appropriate diet, and so forth, there is no reason why he would not get well.

Therefore — our own system makes the same point as before — it would make sense that someone who died from a snake bite could be brought back when the adverse condition, the snake poison, was removed through the recitation of specific mantras or through cutting out the areas affected by the snakebite. Once the adverse conditions had been removed, the dead body would be able to act as the substantial cause of a mental consciousness and the dead person would come back to life.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What does an opponent say in response to our own system's argument that when the adverse conditions that caused death have degenerated, the dead body can act as the substantial cause of the mental consciousness?
2. Why are the two, the opponent's example and that which it exemplifies, not compatible?
3. What are the two types of transformation?
4. Cite examples of each of the two types of transformation that are not mentioned in the text.
5. Why does an opponent assert that an illness is irreversible?
6. According to our own system, why is an illness necessarily reversible?
7. What are the three causes of death?

8. Why does it follow from the opponent's assertion that there are no incurable illnesses?

## SETTING FORTH THE DEFINITION OF SUBSTANTIAL CAUSE

[This is divided into:]

- (1) The definition of substantial cause
- (2) The body does not [satisfy] that [definition] as regards to the mind

## THE DEFINITION OF SUBSTANTIAL CAUSE

To counteract the misperception that the body is the substantial and thus the indispensable cause of the mental consciousness, Dharmakirti presents the definition of substantial cause:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Without the transformation of the substantial cause  
The substantial result would be unable to change.  
[This is] like, [for] example, without the transformation  
Of the clay [there would be no transformation of the] vase, and so forth.*

Regarding the subject, the flame of a lamp, it is **the substantial cause** of the rays of the flame of the lamp, (a) because **without the transformation of** [the flame's] nature, **the substantial result**, the nature of the rays of [the flame] would be unable to transform [and] (b) because [the flame] is the unique and direct placing agent of the mark, the mere nature [of the rays]. This is like, for example, without the transformation of the clay, there would be no transformation of a clay vase, and so forth.

The definition of substantial cause is: that which mainly generates its substantial result, a continuum of a similar type.

This means that the flame of a lamp (or a butter-lamp<sup>145</sup>) is the substantial cause of the rays of the flame since the flame transforms into or becomes the rays, with the rays being the flame's continuum of a similar type. The rays are the flame's continuum of a similar type because they are a subsequent continuum as well as the result of the flame.

If the nature or entity of the flame did not change or transform, the rays would be unable to transform either. This is similar to the example of clay and a clay vase: unless the nature of the clay is transformed, the clay vase cannot change or transform. In other words, without the clay changing moment by moment and eventually transforming into the clay vase, there would be no clay vase that also undergoes momentary changes and transforms into its substantial result.

Therefore, a substantial cause is *the direct and unique placing agent of the mark*, the nature of the substantial result.

Please note that in the context of a cause and its effect, 'a placing agent' (Tib: *jog byed*) is that which generates, creates or produces a result. The term "mark" literally means 'hand mark' or 'hand impression' (Tib: *lag rjes*) and when used together with the term

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<sup>145</sup> Please note that although Gyaltsab Je cites a similar example of a substantial cause and its substantial result – a flame and its rays – here he does not use the Tibetan term "*mar me*" ("butter fire" or "flame of a butter-lamp") but the term "*sgron me*" which is often translated as "lamp" or "light". However, in Tibetan the two terms are synonymous, with "*mar me*" or "*sgron me*" not always literally referring to a butter-lamp. In Tibetan, even the flame of a paraffin lamp is called "butter-lamp". Yet both "*mar me*" and "*sgron me*" refer to an open flame which is why I chose to translate "*sgron me*" as "flame of a lamp".

“placing agent” it means ‘result’. So, a cause is described as ‘a placing agent of a mark’ (Tib: *lag rjes ‘jog byed*), because it is that which generates its result.

Gyaltsab Je here describes a substantial cause, not just as ‘a placing agent of a mark’ but as a *direct* and *unique* placing agent of a mark’. This is because a substantial cause such as the flame of a lamp is the direct cause of — and thus directly generates — its substantial result, the rays, without first giving rise to something other than the rays. Also, the flame is the unique cause of the rays, for of the two, the characteristics and the nature or entity of the rays, the flame mainly creates the nature of the rays.

## QUESTIONS FOR STUDY

1. What is the definition of substantial cause?
2. Why would it be absurd if a substantial cause, such as the flame of a lamp, did not transform in order to generate its substantial result, the rays of the flame?
3. What is the meaning of this phrase: a substantial cause is the direct and unique placing agent of the mark, the nature of the substantial result.

## THE BODY DOES NOT [SATISFY] THAT [DEFINITION] AS REGARDS TO THE MIND

This outline presents the reason why the body does not satisfy the definition of substantial cause as regards the mental consciousness, and thus does not serve as the mental awareness’ substantial cause:

[Dharmakirti says in the *Pramanavarttika*:]

*Without the transformation of some functioning entity [of the cause]  
It is not reasonable that [the cause which] transforms some functioning entity  
[Of the result] is the substantial cause of that [result]  
It is like an ox and a wild ox.  
The mind and the body are also like that.*

v.63

It follows that **the mind and the body are also** not [related as] substantial cause and substantial result, because **an ox and a wild ox are like that** in that the transformation [of one] does not ensue from the transformation [of the other].

According to our own system, the body does not satisfy the definition of a substantial cause with regard to the mind, because changes to the mind do not depend on changes to the body.

This is similar to, for instance, a domesticated ox and a wild ox<sup>146</sup> in the sense that the transformation of a wild ox does not depend on the transformation of a domesticated ox.

[The reason] is pervaded [by the predicate], because without the transformation of some functioning entity of the cause, it is not reasonable that the cause – which transforms some functioning entity of the result – be that [result’s] substantial cause. For example, like an ox and a wild ox.

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<sup>146</sup> In Tibetan, the term *ba lang* = ox, refers to a domesticated bovine. With regard to a ‘wild ox’, Gyaltsab Je’s *Elucidation of the Path to Liberation* and Khedrup Je’s *Ocean of Reasoning* differ in their spelling. The spelling in Gyaltsab Je’s commentary is *ba min* which literally means ‘non-ox’ (or ‘non-cow’), while Khedrup writes *ba men* which translates to “wild ox” (although sometimes Khedrup also writes *ba min*). According to Geshe Palden Drakpa, here the term refers to a ‘wild ox’, which is why I chose that translation.

The reason of the consequence above (*because the transformation of one does not follow from the transformation of the other*) is pervaded by the predicate (*the mind and the body are not related as substantial cause and substantial result*), which means that: *if the transformation of the mind does not ensue from the transformation of the body, it necessarily follows that the mind and the body do not relate as substantial cause and substantial result.*

This is because the substantial cause cannot possibly transform into its substantial result without undergoing a transformation.

Hence, if the body were hypothetically the substantial cause of the mental consciousness, the mental consciousness could not be transformed without the transformation of the body. Yet, this is not the case, for the transformation of the mental consciousness does not require the transformation of the body, just as changes to a wild ox do not necessitate changes to a domesticated ox.

APPENDIX “A” – Gyaltsab Je’s OUTLINE [presented in the foregoing text] of Chapter 2

***Second Chapter of the Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika***

**EXPLANATION OF [THIS CHAPTER'S] OBJECTS OF REALIZATION – LIBERATION, OMNISCIENCE AND THE PATHS THAT LEAD THERE**

***I. THE GENERAL MEANING***

**1.1. CITING THE EXPLANATION BY ACHARYA DIGNAGA**

**1.2. THE WAY THE MEANING [OF DIGNAGA'S EXPLANATION] IS  
ELUCIDATED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE *PRAMANAVARTTIKA***

**1.3. [DIGNAGA AND DHARMAKIRTI'S] VIEW**

**II. THE MEANING OF THE BRANCHES**

**2.1 PROVING THAT THE MUNI IS A VALID COGNIZER**

**2.1.1. SHOWING BY MEANS OF THE FORWARD SYSTEM THE MANNER IN  
WHICH THE TEACHER ARRIVED [AT HIS GOAL] THROUGH WHAT  
PATHS**

**2.1.1.1. IDENTIFYING THE INSTANCE OF A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* BY WAY OF  
EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF THE *ONE WHO HAS BECOME A VALID  
COGNIZER***

**2.1.1.1.1. THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF A VALID COGNIZER**

**2.1.1.1.1.1. THE NATURE OF THE DEFINITION**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1. THE DEFINITION**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1.1. IDENTIFYING *NON-DECEPTIVE***

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1.2. DISPELLING [THE OBJECTION OF] *NON-PERVASION* (*i.e.*,  
REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION OF A  
VALID COGNIZER IS TOO NARROW)**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1.3. DISPELLING [THE VIEW OF A] *BROAD PERVASION* (*i.e.*,  
REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION IS  
TOO BROAD)**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.2. THE INSTANCES**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.3. ASCERTAINING THAT THE INSTANCES [SATISFY] THE  
DEFINITION**

**END OF SPRING 2015 TEXT**

**2.1.1.1.1.2. THE ATTRIBUTES**

**2.1.1.1.2. SHOWING THAT THE MUNI ALSO POSSESSES THAT DEFINITION (*i.e.*,  
THAT THE MUNI IS A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* OR THAT HE  
POSSESSES *VALID COGNIZERS*)**

**2.1.1.1.2.1. APPLYING (TO THE MUNI) THE MEANING OF *PRAMANA* THAT HAS  
ALREADY BEEN EXPLAINED.**

**2.1.1.1.2.2. EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF ‘HAS BECOME [A *PRAMANA BEING*],’**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.1. THE PURPOSE FOR SAYING “HAS BECOME [A *PRAMANA  
BEING*]”**



**2.1.1.1.2.2.2. REFUTING OBJECTIONS WITH REGARD TO [SAYING “HAS  
BECOME A *PRAMANA BEING*”]**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT GOD], WHO KNOWS HOW TO  
MAKE ALL OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE, IS OMNISCIENT**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.1. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS  
PERMANENT**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.2. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS  
IMPERMANENT**

**END OF FALL 2015 TEXT**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.2. ESTABLISHING THAT [THE BUDDHA], WHO DIRECTLY  
COGNIZES THE MODE OF EXISTENCE OF ALL [OBJECTS  
OF KNOWLEDGE], IS OMNISCIENT**

**2.1.1.2. IDENTIFYING THE DEFINITION OF A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* BY WAY OF  
EXPLAINING THE FOUR REMAINING [FACTORS]**

**2.1.1.3. IDENTIFYING THE PATHS THAT LEAD TO [THE STATE OF BEING A *VALID  
COGNIZER BEING*]**

**2.1.2. SHOWING BY MEANS OF THE REVERSE SYSTEM THE REASON  
FOR THE BUDDHA HAVING ARRIVED [AT HIS GOAL]**

**2.2 PURPOSE OF PRAISING [THE MUNI] ON ACCOUNT OF [BEING] A  
VALID COGNIZER**





APPENDIX “A” – Gyaltsab Je’s OUTLINE [presented in the foregoing text] of Chapter 2

***Second Chapter of the Elucidation of the Path to Liberation, a Detailed Explanation of the Verse Lines of the Pramanavarttika***

**EXPLANATION OF [THIS CHAPTER'S] OBJECTS OF REALIZATION – LIBERATION, OMNISCIENCE AND THE PATHS THAT LEAD THERE**

***I. THE GENERAL MEANING***

**1.1. CITING THE EXPLANATION BY ACHARYA DIGNAGA**

**1.2. THE WAY THE MEANING [OF DIGNAGA'S EXPLANATION] IS ELUCIDATED BY THE AUTHOR OF THE *PRAMANAVARTTIKA***

**1.3. [DIGNAGA AND DHARMAKIRTI'S] VIEW**

***II. THE MEANING OF THE BRANCHES***

**2.1 PROVING THAT THE MUNI IS A VALID COGNIZER**

**2.1.1. SHOWING BY MEANS OF THE FORWARD SYSTEM THE MANNER IN WHICH THE TEACHER ARRIVED [AT HIS GOAL] THROUGH WHAT PATHS**

**2.1.1.1. IDENTIFYING THE INSTANCE OF A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* BY WAY OF EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF THE *ONE WHO HAS BECOME A VALID COGNIZER***

**2.1.1.1.1. THE GENERAL DEFINITION OF A VALID COGNIZER**

**2.1.1.1.1.1. THE NATURE OF THE DEFINITION**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1. THE DEFINITION**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1.1. IDENTIFYING *NON-DECEPTIVE***

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1.2. DISPELLING [THE OBJECTION OF] *NON-PERVASION* (*i.e.*, REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION OF A VALID COGNIZER IS TOO NARROW)**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.1.3. DISPELLING [THE VIEW OF A] *BROAD PERVASION* (*i.e.*, REFUTING THE OBJECTION THAT THE DEFINITION IS TOO BROAD)**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.2. THE INSTANCES**

**2.1.1.1.1.1.3. ASCERTAINING THAT THE INSTANCES [SATISFY] THE DEFINITION**

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**2.1.1.1.1.2. THE ATTRIBUTES**

**2.1.1.1.2. SHOWING THAT THE MUNI ALSO POSSESSES THAT DEFINITION (*i.e.*, THAT THE MUNI IS A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* OR THAT HE POSSESSES VALID COGNIZERS)**

**2.1.1.1.2.1. APPLYING (TO THE MUNI) THE MEANING OF *PRAMANA* THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN EXPLAINED.**

**2.1.1.1.2.2. EXPLAINING THE MEANING OF ‘HAS BECOME [A *PRAMANA BEING*]’**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.1. THE PURPOSE FOR SAYING “HAS BECOME [A *PRAMANA BEING*]”**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2. REFUTING OBJECTIONS WITH REGARD TO [SAYING “HAS BECOME A *PRAMANA BEING*”]**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT GOD], WHO KNOWS HOW TO MAKE ALL OBJECTS OF KNOWLEDGE, IS OMNISCIENT**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.1. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS PERMANENT**

**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.1.2. REFUTING [THE IDEA THAT A CREATOR GOD] IS IMPERMANENT**

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**2.1.1.1.2.2.2.2. ESTABLISHING THAT [THE BUDDHA], WHO DIRECTLY  
COGNIZES THE MODE OF EXISTENCE OF ALL [OBJECTS  
OF KNOWLEDGE], IS OMNISCIENT**

**2.1.1.2. IDENTIFYING THE DEFINITION OF A *VALID COGNIZER BEING* BY WAY OF  
EXPLAINING THE FOUR REMAINING[FACTORS]**

**2.1.1.3. IDENTIFYING THE PATHS THAT LEAD TO [THE STATE OF BEING A *VALID  
COGNIZER BEING*]**

**2.1.2. SHOWING BY MEANS OF THE REVERSE SYSTEM THE REASON  
FOR THE BUDDHA HAVING ARRIVED [AT HIS GOAL]**

**2.2 PURPOSE OF PRAISING [THE MUNI] ON ACCOUNT OF [BEING] A  
VALID COGNIZER**



